

SOMETHING ABOUT O.K. BOUWSMA

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To

Barb
Holly
Ron
Will



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A Sketch of O. K. Bouwsma's Academic Life

Oets Kolk Bouwsma was born in Muskegon, Michigan, in 1898. His parents were Dutch-Americans with close ties to Holland and to the Dutch-American communities in Michigan. He was an undergraduate student at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a graduate student at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He was a student of both English literature and philosophy, and often performed comedy roles in the University of Michigan theater. After a brief teaching position at the University of Michigan, Bouwsma received an appointment to the philosophy faculty at the University of Nebraska in 1928. He taught there until he was retired in 1965. He held various visiting appointments intermittently at Alberta, Columbia, Cornell, San Jose State, Smith, Santa Barbara, University of Pacific, University of Washington, Oxford, and London. At Oxford he was Honorary Professor at Magdalene College in 1950-51 and while there was the first in a series of distinguished philosophers to deliver the prestigious John Locke Lectures. At London, in 1955-56, he was appointed Woods Fellow. He was, in 1956-57, elected President of the American Philosophical Association, Western Division, delivering the Presidential address for that year. After retiring from the University of Nebraska in 1965, he taught philosophy at the University of Texas until his death in 1978. He was named Distinguished Alumnus of Calvin College in 1973. He was awarded an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters from the University of Nebraska in 1975.

In his early years Bouwsma was an advocate of idealism, particularly Hegel's and Bradley's but grew away from idealism finding G.E. Moore's works a guidance. He worked intensely on Moore, publishing papers on him and sending his students from Nebraska to work with him at Cambridge. There, the most notable of his students, Morris Lazerowitz and Norman Malcolm, together with Alice Ambrose, came under the influence of the teaching of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Through their influence, Bouwsma's philosophical life took a radical turn in mid-life. He fed on a bootlegged, hand copy of Wittgenstein's *The Blue Book* which he made from Alice Ambrose's copy. (It was to Alice and several other students that Wittgenstein dictated the notes which came to be known as *The Blue Book*.) From these notes, from discussions with these students, and eventually from discussions with Wittgenstein himself, Bouwsma worked his way to an understanding of *The Blue Book's* central question: What is the meaning of a word? Eventually, in 1953, he had more help with that understanding when his copy of the *Philosophical Investigations* arrived from the publisher. From then until the end of his life he worked steadily at the understanding of that book. His published essays and notebooks prepared in connection with graduate seminars reflect his attention to that task. In addition to his applying these acquired skills to the reading of other philosophy books and novels, he was also a student of Soren Kierkegaard's works. Kierkegaard, as well as Moore, helped him through his struggles with Hegelian idealism and, particularly, gave him guidance on understanding the central force in his life -- his Christian faith.

Bouwsma, though not a famous philosopher, was, I believe, one of the most impressive philosophers of this century. His impressiveness did not come from these handful of awards and distinctions. It came from the philosophy which he did with his philosophical friends in discussions and in related notebooks. Among his friends were Wittgenstein, Moore, Malcolm, Lazerowitz, Ambrose, Anscombe, Smythies, Ryle, Sprague, Lean, Cook, Nielsen, and scores of other graduate students at Nebraska and Texas. It was through his philosophizing with these friends, in his unique manner, that he became impressive and left his mark.

O.K. Bouwsma: A Personal Recollection

I have, for some time now, wanted to write down my recollections of O.K. Bouwsma. He has been dead for some years now, having died in 1978, and while I have co-edited his papers and written about his philosophical work, I have not had the time nor right distance from him to write a memoir of my experiences with him. This still seems to me to be an enormous task. I met him in 1965 and I continue to learn from him through his notebooks and published papers today. My acquaintance with him covers a twenty-five year span and includes seminar discussions and casual discussions, as well as a variety of unusual species of writing. I do not see any easy way of imposing order on all of this. I also grow weak at the thought of trying to capture the spirit of this person -- his unusual and lively character -- and to do it in such a way as to show the relevance of his character to his philosophy. I suppose that the apparent enormity of this task and the certainty that whatever I did would fall short have been the two biggest factors in my delay in taking on this project. I now have the time to write and perhaps enough distance from his initial, overwhelming influence on me to overcome those outstanding obstacles.

I first heard of O.K. Bouwsma in 1964 through my undergraduate teacher Jack Rogers. Rogers taught theology and philosophy of religion at Westminster College in Pennsylvania, having recently completed his Ph.D. at the Free University of Amsterdam. He had been an undergraduate philosophy student of Bouwsma at Nebraska. Rogers knew of my intentions to study philosophy and, more specifically, what I called "Christian philosophy," in graduate school. He began guiding me towards Bouwsma and Nebraska, and eventually helped to get me admitted as a graduate student in philosophy at the University of Nebraska. Rogers knew something of Bouwsma's interest in Wittgenstein's philosophy, but primarily he knew Bouwsma as an unusual philosophy teacher. He told of Bouwsma's persistence in asking for examples and specific cases in response to generalizations, of his reading to his classes from Plato and Dostoevsky, and of his quick wit in philosophical discussions. During my senior year, Rogers had attended one of the annual conferences on Christian philosophy at Wheaton College where Bouwsma had been invited to read a paper and participate in the discussions. The paper he prepared was called: "Adventure In Verification." Rogers was full of stories of Bouwsma's humor. His paper was filled with humorous allusions to Homer and to Athenian life -- and this about a serious subject and humorless people, namely the logical positivists and their critique of religious language. But Bouwsma was no kinder to his religious philosophical friends at the conference. To one person trying to make something of Aquinas' proof based on degrees of perfection in art, Bouwsma asked some questions about whether one of Beethoven's symphonies was a more perfect creation than some current Elvis Presley tune. The juxtaposition of the two was itself funny, but then Bouwsma completed the syllogism aloud: "Therefore God exists?!" More laughter. Undaunted, the Thomist continued: "What would you say if a voice came to you in the middle of the night claiming: 'I am the most perfect being greater than which nothing can be conceived'?" "Congratulations," Bouwsma said with his smile, and the deflation of the balloon was complete. "Professor Bouwsma we are waiting on the edges of our seats for you to say more." "Don't fall off." Rogers had peaked my interest. I wanted to

meet this person who dared enter into the arena of philosophical warfare seemingly armed with humor alone and who was, apparently, fearless.

When I arrived at Nebraska, I had a philosophical hero whom I had never met. I was convinced of his invincibility in philosophical combat and of his grasp of the philosophical basis of Christianity. I also believed that these assets could be transferred to an apprentice such as I intended to be. These expectations were running high, and my anticipation peaked as I appeared in the philosophy seminar room in Love Library for my first encounter with this philosophical giant. The subject was Kierkegaard. The room was full of what must have been every graduate student in philosophy at Nebraska. He later divided the class into two groups -- those who had some experience in the methods of discussion which he practiced and newcomers -- and we met separately. I remember looking around the room at these students, some of whom were to become my life-long philosophical friends, and being surprised by their appearance: blue jeans, cowboy boots, Levi jackets. All were informally dressed, some had cigars and legal pads and fountain pens -- a sure mark of the experienced group. I had just arrived from a small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, which was hardly a formal place, but I had never been in the American West until then. I thought to myself in astonishment: "These people are cowboys!" But the real astonishment was yet to come. Bouwsma appeared in the doorway with a broom in his hand and proceeded to sweep up some dirt from the floor. He then emptied the ash trays on the seminar table into the waste paper basket. I believed that he was the janitor and did not pay much attention to him until he reappeared with a book and sat down with us at the table. This white-haired, gentle, grandfatherly man, who had passed for the janitor, was my philosophical St. George!

I spent one full year working with Bouwsma at Nebraska -- September of 1964 to September of 1965. This was his last year of teaching at Nebraska after having taught there since 1928. At the end of this year, he began a twelve year teaching stint at the University of Texas. Five of us left Nebraska with him at this time to complete our degrees under his direction in Austin. (Jack Murphy, Dewey Jensen, Larry Kimmel, Bill Hines, and myself transferred to Texas. Dick Wood, Jere Jones, Ken Metzger, and Perry Weddle remained to finish their dissertations. Jon Torgerson, Bill Anderson, Roy Cebek, John Schadle, Kay Michaelfelt and others just beginning their graduate work did not make the transfer.) In his last year at Nebraska, Bouwsma read Kierkegaard with us during both the Fall and Winter terms. And during the Summer term, he took us through the beginnings of the *Philosophical Investigations* in what everyone recognized was his last attempt to make clear his understanding of the fundamentals of that book to his cadre of seekers at Nebraska. He also had the practice of meeting on Saturday mornings with this group during the school year to discuss Wittgenstein. As a first year graduate student, I was not yet invited to the Saturday morning sessions, but profited greatly from them in later years. They were essentially like the seminars with the advantage of their being smaller and, consequently, more focused on an individual's problems in reading Wittgenstein.

A seminar with Bouwsma was like nothing I had experienced before. It lasted three hours and met once per week. He brought three pieces of equipment with him to the large table surrounded by about fifteen to twenty students: 1) A book, well worn and underlined with squiggly lines; 2) A yellow legal pad, with tiny, crabbed characters written in fountain pen -- illegibly; and 3) A cigar that constantly needed to be relit. Usually a meeting would begin with the reading of a passage -- never

longer than several paragraphs and often shorter -- from the book we were working on that term. Bouwsma almost always left the choice of the subject and passage up to the students. He would begin by asking what we should talk about for that day and then wait patiently while someone produced a problem. From the problem, we would get the appropriate passage to read. The student who presented it would read the passage and the discussions would begin from there. The next several seminars were usually spent on that passage and the student's problem, although by then more students and more problems were involved in untangling the passage. Bouwsma would then write at length on the issues at hand, during the week between meetings. He would distribute typed copies of his notes periodically. These notes would be specific with respect to the passages discussed, the names of the students who introduced topics, and remarks made which prompted further discussion. I have saved these notes from all of the seminars I attended, and treasure them. The discussions would proceed from the passage which had been read. Bouwsma might ask: "Who understands this?" Sometimes he might focus on one sentence and ask about that. The student would attempt to explain the passage or to say what was difficult about it. From this point it would be impossible to predict what turns the discussion would take. Bouwsma would begin to apply his many skills of philosophical analysis. His questions and responses were always short and often surprising. One never knew what to expect and had to work at what he was trying to convey. The students did the bulk of the talking. What Bouwsma did could best be described as listening. He had remarkably little to say. Often he would stop someone simply by repeating one word that had been said, indicating that he had not understood what was meant. If someone, for example, had said, "Knowledge begins in perception," he might say, "Perception?" -- intoning it to mean that he did not understand how that word was being used. Often he would follow up on a student's remark by saying what would make sense to say if one were not in a philosophical context. "One can never have another person's pain." -- "Why would you want to have it?" Or he might produce an analogical tease: "Is this like: One can never have another person's car?" He would never allow a piece of unexplained philosophical terminology to go by. "Synthetic *apriori* judgment -- What's that? Is it a legal term?" "The self is a series of actual occasions." -- "Are they on a string?" If you needed one of these terms -- even to represent someone else's position or to raise a question about it -- you had to work hard to get it into the record. Often he said nothing but looked at you with his eyes twinkling and with a chuckle that said "You're talking nonsense." (Stephen Toulmin once remarked to me that Bouwsma had a glance which said "That's the silliest thing I ever heard.") If you did not stop and reflect on what you had said or if you went on at length, not feeling the requirement to stop and explain, he would ask you to write something you had just said on the board. Then he would get you to go back and look at the offending sentence. He had an uncanny knack of being able to pick the right sentence on which to focus one's attention.

These were frustrating exercises. One sometimes had the feeling that he was deliberately being obtusive. "Others may be talking nonsense, but I am not," one might think to oneself. Or one might feel that if he would only let me finish, he could explain all this to Bouwsma's satisfaction. Some too felt that he was not taking them seriously when they were speaking of philosophical matters of great significance to them. Another might be upset over the fact that the argument which he had put forward and had been received so badly was none other than one put forward by some great philosopher in the past. "If I am making an argument

identical to one made by David Hume, why is it not good enough to stand when I make it?" He would slow, frustrate, and refuse to understand the arguments of the philosophers of reputation as well as any student's in a seminar.

The single greatest impression he gave me when I spoke in his presence was that he was listening. By this I do not mean what one usually means by that, namely that one is understanding and affirming what another is saying. What I mean is that he was listening so closely to what one was saying that one had better start to listen to oneself. Where one had sloppy thoughts and lazy habits of mind, he could hear them and convey their sloppiness and laziness back. In my own case, rather than not taking me seriously, he was taking me very seriously by listening to me in this manner. I came thereby to recognize in a sense that it was time to take myself more seriously. And this was a common experience in a student's development in his seminars. If one wanted to do philosophy in his presence, one had to learn to do it without pretensions. One had to learn to be clear, to give examples, to avoid familiar philosophical talk as if it were unproblematic, to explain simply, to smell nonsense, and above all to talk sense.

So it went in seminar after seminar. The patterns of teaching the skills of detecting philosophical nonsense and talking sense began to emerge. What he did in discussion was complemented by his notebooks which carried on some of the same techniques and provided the student the opportunity to go back and study them. They continued the class discussions and attempted to shed light on what was still confused and unresolved from the previous class. This showed by example Bouwsma's conception of philosophy as an activity in which one continually struggled to get clear. Philosophy was not a body of knowledge for Bouwsma. It was not a set of things that he or anyone else knew, having found them out. Philosophy was an activity. It was something one did, not something one taught. "I do philosophy" was an expression he was fond of. And he would also say, "I don't know anything." Once, in speaking to me of his son Bill (William J. Bouwsma, an historian at Berkeley), he said, "Bill knows things. He knows a lot. I don't know anything." This was a philosophical remark describing the difference between history and philosophy. In any case, the notebooks showed how philosophy proceeded by continuing to seek clarity and understanding. There were no final results -- neither in discussion nor in the notebooks. And the activity of philosophy was a persistent one. In turn, we were expected to keep notebooks of our own in which we continued the discussions from class, responded to or used his notebooks, and returned to the various passages of the text that we were trying to understand. Occasionally we would read aloud from our own notebooks in the seminar. Usually the student who presented the problem for the day's discussion would rely on the work done in his or her notebook that week. The notebooks were an integral part of Bouwsma's teaching methods.

I might add that there was an ideal of an inquisitive and serious thinker that Bouwsma presented through his notebooks. We knew that unlike most well known philosophers Bouwsma was not working at writing papers for publication. He was working hard at the books and papers on which he had set to work, putting his time and energy into understanding these subjects, because he deemed them important in themselves of his attention. The notebooks were his way of developing an understanding of what he took to be important. They were not written to garner attention or build a reputation for him. He did not have a "career" that he hoped to advance by means of these. They represented singleness of purpose in pursuing philosophical understanding for its own sake -- for himself and for his students.

They constituted for him what Kierkegaard in another context referred to as "purity of heart" -- single-minded attention to duty and the absence of the motive of reward.

These notebooks were patiently developed. There were lengthy tangents. The cases he developed were detailed, and one could see that Bouwsma was enjoying himself in developing the detail. As he generally did not speak at length when questioning a student in class, he overflowed into his notebooks. They were his thoughts in development. In discussion he might ask how to understand a section of Wittgenstein or a paragraph from Kierkegaard. But in the notebook, he would put the question to himself and attempt to provide an understanding of it. In discussion he would listen closely to someone and encourage that person or others to explain what had been said or read. But in the notebook, he would explain or fail to understand what the student had said himself. The notebooks contained his thoughts -- his words. And when he distributed them to his students, in the form of mimeographed handouts, they became little treasures for us. He was a mystery, and the notebooks were an essential part of helping the student to solve the mystery. We could not have persisted in the solution of the mysterious questions, probings, and humor provided by the classes alone. We needed the notebooks to give us explanations and examples of how the philosophical understanding and skills were developed and practiced. I once was shocked by a graduate student in English at Nebraska who said that he had visited a couple of Bouwsma's classes and saw nothing but "a histrionic old man." But that is what one may well have found without a trained eye -- and the eye was trained in part by reading the notebooks.

There were some occasions on which Bouwsma would give us his thoughts directly and at length in a seminar. Occasionally during a seminar meeting, usually but not always toward the end, he would begin to talk and go on for ten or fifteen minutes. Sometimes the discussion had produced more confusion than usual and he wanted to set it straight or, perhaps, he had an observation about the discussion or wanted to set the discussion in some larger framework. The results were marvelous. I remember being spellbound by these little talks -- wishing that he would spend more of the class like this. He would have been a fine lecturer. Sometimes he would develop a case that was needed for the discussion. The case would take the form of a fictional story that he was making up on the spot. He could provide, for example, all the details of a young woman's feelings in falling in love or of a father's giving advice to his daughter before leaving for college. And the emotions and expressions were all just right. There were times too when he read to us from some piece of literature for this same purpose -- to show us an emotion or to capture what it would be like for someone really to have a certain problem. I remember best his reading from Tolstoy and Dostoevsky: "God Sees The Truth But Waits" from *Twenty-Three Tales*, the death scene from *The Death of Ivan Illych*, and "A Hymn and a Secret" from *The Brothers Karamazov*. He also read frequently from Lewis Carroll and from fairy tales. I remember vividly his reading Anderson's "The Little Match Girl" to teary eyed graduate students. His readings were beautiful. The emotions were perfectly captured and the people and problems came alive. He often had to clear his throat as it seemed to dry out, but this did not detract from the spell he was able to cast. Sometimes he would become teary-eyed himself. He once told us that he could seldom finish reading the death of Socrates in the *Phaedo* without choking up -- this in the middle of having done just that. I have since tried to present my classes with such readings on many occasions, but have never been able to read a passage with such feeling and understanding.

I returned to my copies of his notebooks of the two seminars on Kierkegaard done that year at Nebraska to try to find something written from this period that might give one a flavor of Bouwsma and stimulate my own memories. They, in fact, did bring back more memories of the people and discussions which we had and made his voice come alive again. It occurred to me to use them as the basis for continuing these reflections on his seminars. It is not the light which they shed on Kierkegaard which I want to attend to here, but rather on a Bouwsma seminar and on Bouwsma himself.

The seminar during the fall term involved the reading of *The Philosophical Fragments*. We also had copies of *Fear and Trembling*, but we did not discuss the latter much and there is very little reference to it in the notes. The seminar during the winter term of that school year was a continuation of the fall term. In the winter, we read and discussed two chapters of the *Postscript*: "Becoming Subjective" and "Truth Is Subjectivity." I believe that all of us read the whole book. Bouwsma at some point allowed us to bring up material from other parts of the book for discussion, but as usual he wanted us to concentrate on a small amount of material -- that we might learn how to read philosophy. The notes are, by and large, about ideas and passages from these chapters as they passed through the seminar.

Here a special problem arises in so far as you, the reader of these reflections, will probably not have seen these notes that I should like to write about. They are too long to reproduce here, and my intention is not to report on what was said. I hope rather to give the reader a glimpse of the special sort of thinker and teacher that Bouwsma was. To help give that glimpse and to provide some of the background necessary for my remarks, I have selected a number of sentences from the notebooks. I have not arranged them, but rather present them in the order in which they appear in the notebooks. I have numbered them for the purpose of referring to them later.

1. The meaning of a man's life lies in his resolution.
2. Socrates is a pusher, pushing a man on with his questions, in the hope that he will push him on to the point where he will come upon a form of resolution which he can make his own. Then the man will come to self-knowledge as he first comes to have a self to know. The meaning of a man's life lies in his resolution. "This one thing I do."
3. [About Kierkegaard's admiration for Socrates] Now to hold a theory is nothing much, but to hold a theory and be what the theory requires, that is something.
4. And by the way, this may suggest to you that a teacher who is a teacher after the manner of Socrates is not to be judged by the results.
5. What was K. doing? Perhaps I'd better confine myself to asking this concerning the first chapter only.
6. He might have said that he was writing for ... intellectuals who either don't or can't read.
7. K. then asks: "But is the hypothesis here expounded thinkable?" Thinkable? Apparently that you have read through his exposition does not involve that you have understood it.
8. And now what did I remind you of all this for? To show you what trying to understand the expression: "a new creature," "a rebirth," etc. is like. You try to understand this by analogy with your understanding the

same or similar expressions in other contexts. This makes what you were trying to understand seem familiar and common, natural, like the changes in life which we see about us all the while. I need scarcely remind you that K. shouts: "No, no, not at all like that! There is nothing at all like this in all the world."

9. And what am I doing? I think I'm doing more of what K. was doing, bringing out what we may describe as the difficulty of this New Testament language. And

as for the Word being made flesh and the Truth walking around the streets of Jerusalem that as K. says, is that than which no higher absurdity can be conceived from which as St. Anselm has taught us it follows that absurdity exists.

10. I was busy in a previous note discussing a difficulty that Torgerson (a student) introduced.

11. ...and isn't it preposterous that he who had "matters of great pith and moment" to attend to, a solar system and millions of stars, should care whether or not Little Tommy Tittlemouse caught fishes in other men's ditches, following the inclinations of his own heart? Yes it is preposterous. What's a soul compared to all that real estate?

12. [From a discussion] "The book exists." "Is it doing something?" "Yes." "...like breathing, only quieter?" "Sleeping?"

13. But the sentence in the argument very likely does not intend to distinguish ... between perfect sleeper *actualiter*, meaning under the blankets, and the perfect sleeper in *essentia*, meaning in *spe* or *idealiter*, which is not nearly so nice.

14. [After pages of trying to provide contexts for sentences in a student's argument] Like Polonius I should not want to be tedious. I want just to be long winded.

15. A discussion can be stopped or recessed but cannot be finished. Discussants can get tired or desperate, etc.

16. Rabbi Sanders [a student in the seminar] in connection with the idea of God said something like this: "I hear a voice or I read in a book: 'Behave yourself or ...' and I take this as addressed to me." ... I want to say about that that I understand it. There is life in it. ... This has religious significance. The other [a student's proof for God's existence] is for a fiddler, for Nero, perhaps.

17. And now why did I do all this? To refresh myself in connection with the meaning of the expression "the highest task." It may not help directly, but I consider it a necessity. With me the longest way is often the shortest, and the most pleasant.

18. If a man's life is not changed and if he does not grow, it is certain that he is no believer. (subjectivity)

19. I must be on the wrong track.

20. I am trying to find the language which is involved in the subjective. (Grammar)

21. K. here uses some difficult language. ... That doesn't bother me as much as the following. ... What baffles me here is the word "knowledge." ... I am a bit confused at this point. ... As you can see, I am troubled about K.'s use or uses of the word "knowledge."

22. [Schiller quoted by K.] "The history of the world is the judgment of the world." Is it like: "The history of Israel is the judgment of Israel"?

23. Now it is obvious too that there can be no story unless there is some time-binder who keeps the pieces of the story together, in fact to make the story. Let us call this the Transcendental Unity of Hyperceptive Story-Making. And this is what we may call the prime necessity, the Deus Historicus.

24. [K.'s Royal Theatre] God watches jealously and, I want to add, on behalf of the requirement. In any other case the actor in this theatre is disturbed by and fears the requirement as he fears and shrinks from being revealed. First of all, he is compelled to look at himself as he is and not through what other people say that he is, "Verily a nice man," or through what he says about himself whenever he is prompted to defend himself, comparing himself with other people or when he has been especially clever and done something brilliant. Apparently deception here is layers deep and in layers fine and soft. The requirement insists on self-knowledge.

25. Once upon a time economics was described as the dreary science. At a later time aesthetics shared that description. But now what is drearier than ethics? What will you have, rule utility or no rule utility? What a glorious past that was when Moses came down from the mountain, his divine mission furnished with the pomp of thunder in the skies and fire from heaven, the people waiting in dread to hear the announcement of the Maker of all the earth and heaven! Earth-shaker, thunderer! And now, in the new enlightened time what do we have? A generation of tinkerers, traffic experts, great leaders mincing words, mincing, more and again, minced words, stirring the brave hearts of men to venture "to eat a peach," "to measure out their lives" in Cadillacs and promotions. (Notebooks 1965)

Bouwsma taught us to ask of something we read: For whom was this written? Accordingly, I should like to begin with that question in connection with his notes. One answer, of course, would be that they were written for the students in his seminar, and not just students in general, but often for some particular student: #10 "I was busy in a previous note discussing a difficulty that Torgerson introduced." etc. There are at least five students and their problems mentioned by name in these notes with rather lengthy discussions of each. As the seminars began by his asking if anyone had something to put before the class, the notes often began with those same problems or ideas and the discussions that followed from them. So one important answer is that they were written for his students.

But who were his students and what were they doing in his seminars? For now I am not interested in what we thought we were doing. I would like rather to represent what I believe Bouwsma thought we were doing there. Jensen, one student there, later wrote a book which was in part dedicated to Bouwsma. That part of the dedication reads: "And for O.K. Bouwsma who taught me how to read a second time." That, I would like to say, is what Bouwsma thought we were doing in his seminars: learning how to read a second time. A seminar always had a philosopher's book as its starting point: Wittgenstein's *Investigations*, Plato's *Meno*, Pascal's *Pensees*, Kierkegaard's *Postscript*, etc. We were there to learn how to read those books with Bouwsma's help. We were surely not there to get the results of Bouwsma's thinking or research on philosophical problems. There were no results in that sense. The sentence in #4 is self-reflective in this respect: "And

by the way, this may suggest to you that a teacher who is a teacher after the manner of Socrates is not to be judged by the results." Learning how to read a second time or, what comes to the same, learning how to read philosophy, by contrast to receiving the results of someone else's work, involves developing the various "arts" of doing philosophy: "the art of scrutinizing the grammar of a word"; "the art of freeing us from illusions"; "the art of discussion"; etc. I should like to discuss the development of these arts later as they appear in these notes. For now, let a second answer stand to the question: For whom were these notes written? -- for those who would learn to read a second time.

As Bouwsma was not a teacher of results but rather of various arts, a seminar did not build in an orderly fashion. The arts must be practiced as the separate occasions for their practice present themselves. But when such occasions occurred was seldom planned. The students presented the topics for discussion, and there were no prearrangements. And so a third answer to the question of the audience of the notes has to be that they were written for Bouwsma himself as preparation for the seminars. A teacher who is a teacher after the manner of Socrates must prepare himself for discussion. These notes were his preparation, notwithstanding the fact that many were done in response to class rather than beforehand. His writing in those yellow pads for hours every day, day upon day, year upon year, prepared him for his task as a teacher of the arts of doing philosophy. As a fighter attends to the daily preparations of the bout by sparring, jumping rope, pounding bags, and running, Bouwsma attended to his daily preparations by writing in his notebooks, spelling out the grammar of a word, picking out analogies, paraphrasing, and teasing out nonsense. He developed and practiced these arts within his notebooks. And then, in discussion, when the occasion arose, he was prepared to practice them with remarkable skill and effectiveness.

If I might use another simile to describe his preparedness, he was like an old and cunning guide. He always knew where you were even when you did not. He always had been there before, no matter how lost you were. He always knew what question, what word, what analogy, what deliberate misunderstanding would stop you in your tracks and give you pause to rethink where you had just been. As there was no result, it was not as if he was correcting your course so that when you drifted too far from the trail, he brought you back to it. He knew the woods with all their hues and sounds, the lay of the land, the smells of water, rock, and pine. For those in a hurry to get somewhere, i.e. those fixed forever on obtaining results, there was nothing much of value. But if you wanted to learn the woods in which you were lost, he was prepared to call your attention to how you were looking at them through your eyes. "I can't find my way out of these words." But he knew his way out. He always knew. His notebooks, then, were preparation for his task as such a guide. Here one might speak at length of the task as an appointed task, as J.L. Craft did at Bouwsma's retirement. One could not understand Bouwsma outside that idea. But for now, I will only speak of the preparation for his task as guide as another important answer to the question: For whom were these notes written? They were written that he might be prepared to fulfill his task. Note, for example, sections #19, 20, 21. They show Bouwsma at work trying to pick his way through some difficult language in the *Postscript*. This section of the notebooks was clearly written for himself. The art of finding one's way when lost was what enabled him to guide others, but it was not something he stopped doing as if it were an acquired object.

In Bouwsma's paper called "The Blue Book," he describes the arts which Wittgenstein practices in *The Blue Book*: the art of attacking certain questions, of disentangling, of removal and riddance, etc. However it happened and whatever the differences, Bouwsma practiced these arts as well. He practiced them daily, as I have indicated above, to the point that they were second nature to him. I would like to pick out several of these arts as he used them in these notes on Kierkegaard. I have tried to provide several key sentences from the notes in the above selections, but I will have to supplement them with more of their contexts to illustrate the points that I want. One should understand at the outset that Bouwsma had great respect for and approval of Kierkegaard's works, and that some of the arts which he frequently used in a negative way towards philosophical theories were not so used with Kierkegaard.

I will begin by calling notice to some of the arts connected to the remarks in section #8 above. The context for those remarks is a note which begins by suggesting that the *Philosophical Fragment* were written for intellectuals who cannot or do not read, and that Kierkegaard intended to present difficulties for those intellectuals in particular who understood Christianity as a kind of philosophical system. Having presented the two teachers in the first fragment, Kierkegaard then asks: "But is the hypothesis here expounded thinkable?" Bouwsma then works at making sure the reader understands some of the difficulty that Kierkegaard wants him to feel. Bouwsma, worried too about the intellectual who could not read (the student in the seminar), tried to insure that in having read the first fragment he not find the hypothesis thinkable.

To bring out the detail of part of the difficulty, he selects the idea of a "new creature" that goes along with Christ as teacher. He asks if this idea is like anything we have come upon before. Is it like "I feel like a new man" or can it be connected to such expressions as, "The day I changed my life" and "After that she was never the same." He develops cases that go along with the latter. Then he points out that there are regular changes in one's life -- an infant, a child, a youth, etc. "You're not a young girl any more. You are a young woman."

At this point the sentences in #8 occur: "And now what did I remind you of all this for? To show you what trying to understand the expression: 'a new creature,' 'a rebirth,' etc. is like. You try to understand this by analogy with your understanding the same or similar expressions in other contexts. This makes what you were trying to understand seem familiar and common, natural, like the changes in life which we see about us all the while. I need scarcely remind you that K. shouts: 'No, no, not at all like that! There is nothing at all like this in all the world.'"

The practice of several arts are involved in this note. The predominant one, and the one that can be found in almost anything Bouwsma wrote or spoke, was that of asking for the cases in which a word, expression, or sentence was used. This, of course, is basic to what Wittgenstein had taught. But Bouwsma was unusually good at it. His cases were always realistic and never fantastic. In his cases no one ever stole to feed his starving family or returned a weapon to a criminally insane lender. They were, rather, natural and ordinary, such as in this case, a father concerned with his daughter's behavior -- chiding her that she is not a girl any longer, but a woman. The cases came from daily life and, frequently, from great literature. And in discussion, he had an unmatched talent for acting them out. Sometimes he could imply the whole context by the intonation of a single sentence.

In "The Blue Book" he connected this practice of developing cases with "the art of scrutinizing the grammar of a word." It also connects to "the art of discussion," "the art of helpful reminders," and "the art of disentangling." The point in this case was to show a difference. "New creature" and "change" in one's life are familiar ideas to us, and we try to understand the New Testament concept of "new creature" by our "analogy with our understanding the same or similar expressions in other contexts." In this instance it will not work, for the New Testament concept can be understood only in connection with God who is able to recreate a being -- to make a new creature from an old one.

Here one might think of it as the "art of reminding" -- reminding us that the grammar of "new creature" outside the Scriptures looks different than from within. We are reminded too that we can easily grasp what is meant by "new creature" outside the Scriptures, but that difficulty arises in understanding it within. And we are thereby reminded that this rebirth or change to a new creature cannot be the object of a psychological or philosophical (Hegelian) theory about developing self-consciousness.

This "art of making clear certain differences," in general the differences between Christianity and philosophy, was what attracted Bouwsma to Kierkegaard. He thought hard, I would suppose all of his life, about how to understand and to talk about Christianity. But at some point when he began to develop the art of philosophizing which he describes in "The Blue Book," in himself, these techniques carried over into his thought about Christianity. Kierkegaard, who understood differences and who shared many of Bouwsma's own features -- the love of language, the love of humor, the vision of philosophy as an ethical task -- became a natural ally for him in his teaching.

Closely connected to the technique of asking for cases in which the troubling expression might be used is that of hunting for analogies. Is the grammar of this word like the grammar of that word? Are their so called "surface grammars" similar and is that what makes us overlook the differences in their "depth grammars"? (Bouwsma would not talk in this way for he avoided anything that would give a technical sound to what he was doing.) One question or claim sounds analogous to another. As the latter makes sense, could one then suggest that we proceed with the former as if it were the latter? This was often an occasion for humor. I have copied an example of it in section #12: A student in offering a proof for God's existence began with: "The book exists." Bouwsma replies, "Is it doing something?" The student, now bewildered answers "Yes." Bouwsma presses the analogous grammar: "Is it like breathing, only quieter? ... perhaps it's sleeping?" In these and other ways Bouwsma tried to train himself and us to hunt for analogous grammars which could lead us out of confusions. In learning this technique we all found a new expression on our lips: "Is it like . . .?" Between this and asking for cases and writing in our own legal-pad notebooks, we were surely oppressive to the uninitiated.

There is a rather long set of notes from which I pulled the above discussion of the book. That set illustrates some of the arts already discussed and a few others as well. The notes were prompted by a proof for God's existence that a certain student had constructed. I believe it was distributed, but I have no copy of it and Bouwsma's notebook only refers to it. The proof must have been some form of cosmological argument. The student, as I recall, was a medical doctor, a psychiatrist, and a Thomist. I will refer to him as "Dr. M."

Dr. M. begins his proof with these claims: 1) "This is a book"; and 2) "This book exists." Without any explanation of what he is up to, Bouwsma provides a several page account of a situation in which Dr. M. uses his sentences. The story which develops is both odd and humorous. Using these sentences is not as normal as one might suppose. It seemed to Bouwsma that the situation needed a book that did not look like a book in order for Dr. M. to say, "This is a book." So the book is as large as a house. But the book is only described at first; later, after it has been constructed by carpenters and hoists, Dr. M. tells a golfing friend "This book exists!"

The account goes on to weave each of the claims of Dr. M.'s proof into the increasingly odd account of the book as large as a house. In connection with the claim, "To exist is a perfection," we get the book sleeping, Lady Macbeth sleeping poorly, Duncan sleeping well, and logs as perfect sleepers. We also get the distinction between "perfect sleeper *actualiter*, meaning under the blankets, and the perfect sleeper *essentialiter*, meaning in *spe* or *idealiter*, which is not nearly so nice." What has become of Dr. M.'s proof in all of this? And, what has become of Dr. M. in all of this? He, after all, could have taken in a Woody Allen movie if he wanted a plot and lines like these, and the humor would not have been at his expense. This is a breach of philosophical seriousness.

I am not sure what Bouwsma thought he was doing for Dr. M. The jokes and the barbs aimed at Dr. M. make me think that Bouwsma thought him curable; they certainly indicate that Bouwsma thought him bright and serious. But the note was also written with an eye on the rest of us. What would we now make of it? There is no explanation that accompanies it. Who of us would not be able to put it aside? Would it serve as a puzzle that someone may now get better at "the art of working puzzles"? Would someone upon working through the exercise begin to acquire a "quickened sense of the queer"? -- or have the difference between philosophical language and ordinary language become clear? So there were tests, after a fashion, in these seminars!

Bouwsma's use of humor was an integral part of his work and character. As I said in connection with Dr. M., I do not believe Bouwsma would use it against someone that he did not think bright and able. He would use it against any serious philosophy student. He would use it to bring someone to self-examination. Everyone who met him or heard him read a paper or response or sat in on a seminar has a humorous anecdote to relate. He did on-the-spot comedy; I never heard him tell a joke. He was the master of every situation. He always had a quip, a pun, a tease, and if you decided to play too, he loved it. His timing, his elfish look, the chuckle which he sometimes covered in fake surprise, the mind which loved to play with words, were parts of him that cannot be separated out. I said above that he used his humor for philosophical purposes, and while true, that is misleading. It makes it sound as if he always calculated the effects of his humor. But he was like this with everyone, and as near as I could tell, it was not something that he could turn on and off. He certainly did not reserve it for philosophy alone. And when it was used philosophically, it generally stemmed, I believe, from self-amusement. In section #23 for example, the lines about the "Transcendental Unity of Hyperceptive Story-Making" were not for Schiller or Voltaire or Kant, all of whom are connected to the pun. The humor was not to edify the students reading the notes. He was simply playing. Here it was just a man who loved to play with words. Sometimes he put that love of play to use -- sometimes to a deft use -- like the sharpest knife in the hands of a surgeon, and sometimes he did not. His natural talent for humor and

word play were a part of his personality, and when he put them to philosophical use it was a most impressive use of his personal traits in that regard.

In juxtaposition to Dr. M.'s proofs stands the quote from Rabbi Sanders and the remark about it (section #16). Rabbi Sanders: "I hear a voice or read in a book: 'Behave yourself or ...' and I take that as addressed to me. I am not afraid of any man. But that frightens me, puts the fear of God into me." Bouwsma: "I want to say about that that I understand it. There is life in it. ... It has religious significance. The other [Dr. M.'s] is for a fiddler, for Nero perhaps." This remark has to do with more than the difference between sense and nonsense in philosophy. Bouwsma recognizes that a religious view, a way of life, and a serious man are tied up with this remark. By contrast Dr. M.'s proof plays no role in the life of a religious person. That fact is connected to the presence of sense in the rabbi's remark and the lack of it in Dr. M.'s proof. But in addition, the rabbi's remark has awareness of an "ethical task" tied up with it. He feels the requirement of duty laid upon him. And that was impressive to Bouwsma.

Throughout these notes Bouwsma shows great sensitivity for what Kierkegaard calls "the ethical" or having an "ethical task." I tried to capture this in sections #1, 2, and 3, on Socrates, #24 on revealing oneself in the Royal Theatre, and #25 on the contrast between philosophical ethics and Moses bringing God's commands. Perhaps this might be called "the art of clarification, of relief from the toils of confusion." In a sense, all of the notes are written with a view towards clarification. But the particular art which I have in mind to show in selecting these passages is that of saying what another has said in a way that clarifies and organizes confusing or difficult passages. Sometimes he is able to do this in a single sentence in the midst of a larger note. An example from the selections on Socrates is #3: "Now to hold a theory is nothing much, but to hold a theory and be what the theory requires, that is something." Think of how much of what makes Socrates special is captured here. All the consistency between how he conducted himself as a philosopher and what his philosophical ideas were, his ignorance, his special questioning, etc., are all brought together in a single sentence. But Bouwsma is also writing about Kierkegaard here too. And with the same sentence he captures the essence of the difficult notion of "subjectivity." The troubling aspect falls away.

Another example of this, again from Socrates, is one sentence in #3. After discussing Socrates as someone who pushed another to form a resolution of his own by his questioning, he writes: "Then the man will come to have self-knowledge as he first comes to have a self to know." Here he makes use of Socrates through an interesting interpretation to get at some very difficult work of Kierkegaard on the self. One must have toiled over the passages parodying Hegel in *The Sickness Unto Death*, over the various forms of despair written of in that book, over the difference between the ethical and the aesthetical in *Either-Or*, over the folly of "double-mindedness" in *Purity of Heart*, and over "the ethical task of an individual" in the *Postscript* to appreciate the economy and insight of this remark. The self is something gained by forming a resolution for one's life. Gaining a self is an ethical task, and maintaining that self requires self-knowledge with respect to the resolution. "Have I kept it?" These ideas tie in with much more, and reading Bouwsma's notes is no substitute for reading Kierkegaard. Yet the marvelous clarity and power of these sentences make Bouwsma on Kierkegaard worth reading in himself. They are not merely well expressed aphorisms of one who has a gift for economy of language. They are written with a kind of authority -- the authority of one who has

prepared himself for the reading of these books and of one who has himself formed a resolution.

I would like somehow to make it clear that he could write with such force about resolution and ethical task, because he himself had resolution and an ethical task. He could write about revealing oneself "in layers deep and in layers fine and soft" in the Royal Theatre, because he had struggled with Hegel and historical idealism. And he could write about the pale task of philosophical ethics compared to the virulent ethical tasks Moses brought down from the mountain, because he knew something of the relative strengths of these tasks from personal struggles too. I would like to make all of that clear because that would make clear some of the source of his student's great admiration of him and of the bond which grew between him and each of us. However, one would really need to know the inner history of a person to tell that story. As students we had access to neither the "Royal Theater" nor the "little private theater" to which Kierkegaard alludes.

After a semester of discussion on Kierkegaard, Bouwsma knew that my interest in philosophy centered in understanding religious belief. Then I thought of my task in philosophy as providing rational defenses for the propositions of Christianity. Neither Kierkegaard nor Bouwsma had had much effect on me to this point. In spite of my philosophical misunderstanding of Christianity, Bouwsma recognized my seriousness and, I now see in retrospect, what must have been something of his own struggles with Christianity in me. Sometime that winter he felt he knew me well enough to ask if I would enjoy driving him and Gertrude to church on Sunday mornings. I had just bought a car -- a 1960 Pontiac, which was large and comfortable. Though the Bouwsmas were hardly feeble, my driving would be a relief for them -- especially in the winter. He also suggested that it would give us an opportunity to talk. I was pleased that he thought to ask me and that we could talk and attend church together. I was also greatly impressed by the seriousness of someone who would drive to Omaha -- a distance of one hundred twenty miles round trip -- for church. There were, after all, churches in Lincoln.

The Bouwsmas attended the Christian Reformed Church which is a splinter of the Dutch Reformed Church. I do not understand the division to this day, though I understood the former to be more conservative and evangelical than the latter. Whatever the differences, one knew in one visit that John Calvin had been there. The exterior of the Christian Reformed Church in Omaha, though new, was plain. The interior was equally plain. I do not remember if there was any stained glass, but if there was, it was minimal. There was a central pulpit and no side lecturns. There were no crosses and no decorations or trappings of any kind. The minister wore a plain suit and tie -- not even a Geneva gown, itself the austere mark of the reformation. The sermon, typically, was a well-constructed exegesis of a Biblical text and was presented in the manner of a college lecture. Once, returning from church, the Bouwsmas spoke critically of that day's minister who they had thought was overly dramatic in his presentation. I had not noticed. The critique of the sermon after church also seemed to be a part of the tradition. Gertrude told me that Oets had recently presented the minister with a large sheaf of papers that he had typed from his notebooks -- they were a critique of the previous week's sermon. The hymns too were simple and traditional. I do not remember an organ in the church -- it was more likely that there was a piano. The hymns and the reading of the Psalms were done enthusiastically by the congregation. There was only one occasion in the half year that I attended at which communion was served. Bouwsma

needed to get permission from the elders in order for me to receive it. Again, communion was done with the simplicity and austerity of the reformed tradition.

After church there were groups of people standing around talking. Most of the talk was family talk: so and so's son got a job in a factory in Des Moines, farm prices, a man's description of his work in a cooler at Armour Meats. They were, of course, all Dutch or of Dutch descent -- primarily middle-class people. Tobacco and alcohol were not prohibited by the church, but regarded as pleasures provided by God. My impression was that birth control was not approved of, at least I remember a discussion in which the view was expressed that birth control was an expression of man's great pride. It reflected the fall of man, his prideful ascendancy over nature -- God's creation -- and replaced the sovereignty of God with the sovereignty of man. This view seemed well received in the discussion. The expression -- "the sovereignty of God" -- was a common one and I recognize John Calvin in it. These impressions are my impressions of what I believe Calvinism came to for them. There was a theological doctrine behind it all, but I doubt if these people had read Calvin's *Institutes* or could discuss the details of that book. Bouwsma must have read Calvin, but I do not remember discussions of the *Institutes* with him. He once mentioned a chapter to me, but mainly when he referred to Calvin it was the instantiation of Calvin in the Christian Reformed Church to which he referred.

Bouwsma attended a reformed church regularly as long as I knew him. In Austin the Bouwsmas attended the University Presbyterian Church at the campus of the University of Texas. It was, I suppose, the closest form of worship to the Christian Reformed Church that they could find in Austin. He remarked to me driving to Omaha that one came to love a certain form or expression of Christianity. One gets used to that expression and then everything else seems foreign by comparison to it. And it should not be changed. But this was, I believe, an aesthetic judgment for him and not an ethical or religious "should not." I did not see Bouwsma participating in the governing of the church nor in the social affairs -- potluck dinners, etc. He may have, but I have difficulty imagining that. He did enjoy the small talk about family and friends after worship. He was generally respected for his theological views in the congregation. I suppose that there was more than one occasion on which he presented a minister with pages from his notebooks on the sermon. He once remarked to me that the object of the sermon was to make plain what God required of the listener. The parishioners often wanted to discuss theological points with him after worship. At the Austin church there was some theological dispute taking place between a Korean group and the rest of the congregation. There was talk of their separating and forming their own church. Both sides in the dispute were consulting Bouwsma and he seemed to be serving as an interpreter to each for the other.

Bouwsma's theological views were orthodox. He was not a trained theologian, although he read some theology. He had a great dislike for Tillich's theology and for liberal Protestant theology in general. He regarded it as bad philosophy. But it also distorted and changed Christianity into something unrecognizable. One of his students had gone to Union Theological Seminary in New York. He went with orthodox views and returned without the concept of sin. How could there be Christianity without sin? Though not a trained theologian, Bouwsma knew the Bible. He loved it as God's word. He loved it as literature. He understood how theologians used it in their work. And he could use it in the same way to understand theological concepts.

On our first trip to Omaha, I asked Bouwsma about Wittgenstein and theology. What did they have to do with each other? He brought up Wittgenstein's remark "Theology as grammar." I said that I had no idea of what Wittgenstein could mean by that. Bouwsma explained. If one pays attention to grammar -- to how a word gets used in everyday expressions and surroundings -- then one will know what to do with it when it confuses him in philosophy. It is a kind of a map or a key which tells one how to proceed. In theology there is something parallel to that. The Scriptures are a kind of map or a key which tell one how to proceed. Theology is not inventing what to say about God. The Scriptures and the people who have tried to take them seriously provide the language by which we come to talk about God. Theologians attempt to put the accounts of the Scriptures together -- they are supposed to put together the discontinuous pieces. There are themes which recur in the Scriptures. The theologian must say what they are. So they must retell what is already there. They are not free to invent. This idea, it seems to me, is central to Bouwsma's orthodoxy, and orthodoxy in general.

As Bouwsma was no liberal theologian, neither was he a conservative theologian nor fundamentalist. One could say neither of Bouwsma any more than one could say such things about his philosophical teacher Kierkegaard. He wrote a note once which he showed to some of us on the "infallibility of the Scriptures." What did this favorite phrase of the conservative theologian mean? It ought to mean, he wrote, that one should not treat the Scriptures as any other book. They were true, but this "true" does not function as it would in connection with any other book written by a man. This is the word of God and one should treat it in that manner. This is what the "infallible word of God" ought to mean. The conservative theologian would see this as a clever evasion. But Bouwsma was not being clever or evasive. He understood, in contrast to the conservative theologian, that the Bible is not a book of true propositions -- not a science or history book describing how things stand in the world.

This idea of the centrality of the Scriptures in theology and in the religious life generally was the cornerstone of Bouwsma's Calvinism. Both liberal and conservative theologians labor under confusions which were not a part of Bouwsma's understanding of Calvin. The centrality of the Scriptures placed the word of God in a special role in the life of the Christian community. It made, in effect, each person a priest, as there were no intermediaries -- neither priest nor theologian -- between God's speaking through his word and the individual who received it. The simplicity of the church building, of the service (down to the dress of the minister), and of the communion, were all implications of Calvin's reformation. Before meals Bouwsma would say a simple memorized blessing; afterwards he would sometimes read a Psalm. He ate simply (though Gertrude was an exceptional cook). He dressed simply -- a plain suit, single-colored tie, white shirt. He drove a plain, though large and comfortable, family car. He was thrifty and prudent with his money from what I could tell. And he disdained all forms of ostentation. These were all the products, I believe, of Calvin's reformed Christianity in his life.

I struggled most of that first year at Nebraska and well on into the next year trying to make sense of Bouwsma. He was like a philosophical text which presented an immense challenge and promised great reward for the effort of understanding it. There was Bouwsma the Calvinist, Bouwsma the enigmatic seminar director, Bouwsma the reader of Kierkegaard, and Bouwsma the friend and reader of Wittgenstein. How could all of these possibly fit together? It was not just an

intellectual puzzle for me; I felt that the answer to this question would change my life. It was not that he could think this thought for me, but rather that I sensed that he had a world view which brought together the pieces of the very same puzzle that I had but had not fully articulated yet.

I had studied philosophy at Westminster College where John Calvin had also left indelible marks. My primary teacher there, Tom Gregory, in addition to preparing me in the history of philosophy proposed seeing that history from a Christian perspective. Christianity too had philosophical presuppositions and one needed to be clear about what they were. A sound Christian philosophy could be built on these presuppositions, and this philosophy proposed to describe how the world stood, i.e. to provide true propositions about the world. Currently, one might call this "Christian realism." In any case this was what I brought with me to my work with Bouwsma and I thought I would find something like that in him. My philosophical baggage served to complicate my task of understanding Bouwsma, though one had to have some philosophical baggage for Bouwsma to have an effect. My beginnings of understanding came through my work on Kierkegaard, guided by Bouwsma that year.

My worry was how to show the propositions of Christianity to be true -- which ones should be believed by any rational person. Belief, for me, meant to be able to assent to some proposition. I preferred reading those philosophers who would give a defense of those beliefs and felt the challenge of those who would attack them. Under Bouwsma's guidance, my reading of Kierkegaard came as a great relief to this burden of defending Christian beliefs. Bouwsma showed the misunderstanding of this task. The essence of Christianity was the Absolute Paradox. It was a scandal to philosophy. The teacher in Christianity was totally opposite to Socrates the teacher -- the best representative of philosophy. A philosophical defense was impossible and misdirected one's energy. Belief in Christianity did not mean assent to propositions. Belief meant that one tried to live the life of Christ -- that one obeyed the Commandments, lived in humility, acknowledged one's sins, lived the life of a new creature. I cannot sort out what of this is Bouwsma and what Kierkegaard. For me there is no separation. Kierkegaard wrote books, indirectly communicating this understanding of Christianity. Bouwsma read those books with students, helping them, also indirectly, to come to an understanding of those ideas. We did not read the books and discuss them as scholars. We were not being trained to take our places as the next generation of philosophy professors. We read those books and discussed them as the keys to understanding life's essential problems. We were, in Bouwsma's presence, lovers of wisdom. He was a philosopher in the noblest sense of that word and was the occasion for our entry into that love.

On through that year, I did not read Wittgenstein with Bouwsma. I knew of his great influence on Bouwsma, but I had very little idea of what that influence came to. It was having its influence on me in subtle ways through Bouwsma's insistence on our explaining ourselves in ordinary language, on our giving examples of our generalizations, on our attending to the uses of a word, etc. But I could not have said at this time how Bouwsma put Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard and his Calvinist Christianity together. I now understand that Wittgenstein cleared ground in philosophy and made room for the mystical. Bouwsma understood how Wittgenstein's sensitivity to the workings of language showed the nonsense of philosophical systems. But Christianity was not a philosophical system. It was a way of life which one adopted, or tried to adopt, and one could not be aided in that

task by building a philosophical system underneath it. In fact, the recognition of the failure of philosophical systems would mean that one could feel the need more keenly for a religious recognition of the mystical. Wittgenstein himself felt this. In his notebooks containing his conversations with Bouwsma, Bouwsma recalls Wittgenstein's remarking that Newman had a "queer mind." Wittgenstein quickly added that he did not say this because Newman was a convert to Catholicism. His best students were converts to Catholicism. (I assume Wittgenstein was referring to Smythies, Anscombe, and Geach. Other students such as Drury and Bouwsma himself fit as well into this category of people who were religious in some traditional way.) Wittgenstein's destructive function in philosophy identifies and preserves the mystery. "What can be said can be said clearly or not at all" (*Tractatus*). The Unknown is revealed in the known (Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*). The pieces of the puzzle -- Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard, Calvin -- were all there and fitted to each other. They awaited my discovery. But Bouwsma was in no hurry. He did not teach by explaining his world-view to students in a series of lectures.

Some time in that winter term of my year at Nebraska, I spoke to Bouwsma about his being my M.A. thesis adviser. I told him that I wanted to write on the contemporary Dutch philosopher, Herman Dooyewaard. Dooyewaard proposed to provide a Christian philosophy -- one which made Christian presuppositions and organized all areas of thought and life in a Christian perspective. His philosophical system was also heavily influenced by Kant, and there was talk of the *apriori* and the empirical needing to be synthesized to produce knowledge. There were three large and difficult volumes of this together with a fourth indexing the work. It bore the heavy title: *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*. It was widely known and admired among American Calvinists and particularly in the Dutch reformed churches. I had written my undergraduate honors thesis on Dooyewaard and Kant, so I had some familiarity with his work and admired his attempt to build a Christian philosophy. In my total ignorance of what Wittgenstein and Bouwsma were about, I supposed that Bouwsma would approve of Dooyewaard's project. As I told him about my proposal to work on Dooyewaard, he said very little. He agreed to work with me but said that he had not read Dooyewaard. I would have to write something for him on Dooyewaard, explaining in very basic language what he was doing. He made this task sound as if my piece of writing would be for him to see what Dooyewaard's views were. I was going to get a chance to bring something new to Bouwsma. And that is what I set out to do.

For the next two months, I spent all of my time, beyond the basic time required for my seminars, reading and preparing my paper on Dooyewaard. I did this seriously and with the energy of a missionary. When I was ready, I gave it to Bouwsma and we set a time to discuss it. Bouwsma's office was on the top floor of Love Library at the time, and as I approached his office I could hear him reading out loud to himself from Kierkegaard's *Postscript*. He had told us that he did this to help himself understand what he read. He often recommended it to us and had us read aloud from our books or notebooks in class. So it was; he was there reading to himself when I knocked. I came in and we began. I read from a section of my paper. He asked me to explain what I meant. I had written some nonsense about Being pointing the way to meaning. He asked me what Being was? I said it was whatever existed. He asked for an example. I said, "Well, anything that existed." He said, "A fish, for example?" "Well, O.K.," I replied, "a fish will do." "And the fish points to something, to meaning? It must be a swordfish and points with its nose?" Dooyewaard was not there to help me. I felt abandoned in the way Meno

felt abandoned when Gorgias was not there to defend himself in front of Socrates. "A swordfish!" I was desperate. Matters got worse. For my problem of how to synthesize the *apriori* categories with the empirical, he recommended Scotch tape. Squiggly lines everywhere underlined the technical language in my text, indicating that he did not understand. It was dawning on me that his not understanding was not a function of his ability to grasp, but my ability to explain and the text's obtuseness. His comments at the end of the paper were in the same spirit. The final remark I can still quote exactly after twenty-five years. He wrote: "Philosophy is nonsense. Christian philosophy is Christian ..." Christian nonsense. I did not know what to be more scandalized by -- that Bouwsma thought philosophy nonsense or that he thought Christian philosophy nonsense. For some time afterwards I went about asking his students what he meant when he wrote that philosophy was nonsense.

The discussion left me confused and embarrassed. I now see that this was the best possible response for me, and the one he probably hoped for. But at the time I felt miserably stupid. I thought that I had understood this difficult book and these problems and concepts, but I did not. I had pretended to understand them, but did not know that I had been pretending. I had pretensions and I was having them exposed. Philosophical understanding had always been a matter of pride to me. I believed I could understand any book -- no matter how difficult -- if I took the time to work at it. I felt, all at once, that I had fallen victim to this pride. It was not just this book and this occasion. It was my life in philosophy in general. I tried to cover up my embarrassment and stupidity with some more stupid remarks, but it was too late. I was already seeing that my life in philosophy was going to have to take a drastic turn or I would have to get out of philosophy and do something else. Over the next six months, my inward dialectic developed along these lines. I considered leaving philosophy for seminary and, alternately, I vowed to take up philosophy seriously and learn whatever it was Bouwsma had to offer. All of the students who ended up working seriously with him had some similar sort of experience in which they dropped their pretensions in philosophy and began something new. It was not unlike the experience repeated in the Socratic dialogues where Socrates first brings his students to awareness of ignorance -- after that they may begin.

With Bouwsma the experience was not a movement from the awareness of ignorance to knowledge of the hidden essences of the world. In fact, it was, in an odd way, the reverse of that. While, like Socrates' students, we first had to shed a certain kind of pretension, unlike them, we had to move from philosophical theorizing about essences back to the language of our familiar, apparent world whose language we all knew. The pretensions that I, at least, had was that I understood, or thought I did, philosophical theories and terms which I did not. What Bouwsma showed us was that the familiar language and experiences were the means by which one could understand those philosophical ideas, if the latter were to be understood at all. He frequently remarked that we should practice replacing unfamiliar language in philosophy with familiar language. (He very seldom used the expression "ordinary language," because he felt that that too had become a philosophical term after Wittgenstein.) What alternatives were there? If we understand by means of language, then we have to understand some piece of unfamiliar language by means of language that we now understand. This conception of doing philosophy came as a great relief to me. Previously, the task had been to understand immensely difficult books which presupposed a grasp of the Western philosophical tradition and also that the book in front of one was using the terms and concepts in the same way as the tradition. Such difficult books used language

that one was familiar with in new ways that were not yet explained. But Bouwsma's conception of philosophy required that we attend to how we in fact use some expression or word and that we attend to our own experiences. This was something that any adult speaker of a language could do. If one could speak, one had the essential prerequisite for doing philosophy. The truth was within the learner. One need not have read the entire history of philosophy in order to make an intelligent move on a philosophical problem. I did not have to read Hume or Moore to know how the expression "I know" is used. I could drink this water from my own well. This too reduced the pressure for cultivating pretensions. At the same time it created a great confidence that I could be a good philosopher. I could do philosophy without having to know all of the significant philosophical theories, provided I attended closely to the use of certain expressions.

I think now that I have made this new conception of philosophy sound too simple. I have ignored the details of the many skills involved in analyzing a philosophical problem -- the prodding for misleading analogies, the struggle with the mystique of the substantive in the use of a word, etc. But I shall allow the oversimplification to stand in order to make the point that Bouwsma's conception of the development of a philosophy student moved that person from abandoning pretended understanding of philosophical theories to a new-found confidence in the arts of philosophical discussion.

During the entire university term of 1964-65, there was much talk of Bouwsma's retiring. As a first year graduate student, I was not privy to the dialectics of the philosophy department and to their attempts to keep Bouwsma at Nebraska. He had come in 1928 and was one of the cornerstones of that department for many years. Nebraska had a mandatory retirement age for state university employees of sixty-five, and so far as I knew there was nothing Robert Dewey, the chair, or anyone could do to keep Bouwsma there. Dewey told me that he hoped to make arrangements for Bouwsma to return to Nebraska after a year of retirement as an adjunct of some kind. But that never happened. Sometime in the winter term, Bouwsma announced that he had accepted a position at the University of Texas.

Working with Bouwsma, trying to acquire the skills of attacking a philosophical problem in his style, took time -- certainly several years. I was only beginning to realize how much there was for me to do. I knew that if I were to become a philosopher under this new conception of philosophy that I would have to continue my work with him at Texas. Bouwsma's other students for the most part split on whether to stay or go with him on the basis of where they were with respect to finishing their degrees. I mentioned above how this worked out. Of the students who went to Texas, Bouwsma was probably more surprised by my following him than the others. The others had worked with him longer and I was noticeably behind them in grasping what he was trying to do in philosophy. I think, too, that Bouwsma expected that I would leave graduate school in philosophy for seminary training and ordination. Like Wittgenstein, Bouwsma did not encourage his students to seek a career in university teaching. The sort of work he did in philosophy was for philosophers who could not resist the seduction of philosophical thought. C.S. Lewis relates in his autobiography that he was stunned by a remark of his Platonist friend Owen Barfield that philosophy for Socrates was not a subject but a way. So too with Bouwsma, it was a way or activity, and it was certainly not a subject. "I do philosophy," was the expression he used, and I never heard him say "I teach philosophy." In any case, he was I believe, most surprised by my telling him that I wanted to go to Texas. He was probably surprised by the

fact that five of us intended to come. And I doubt that he said anything to encourage or to discourage any of the others. Mid-way in the winter term then, we began to make arrangements for our transfer to Texas.

During the summer term of 1965, Bouwsma directed a graduate seminar on Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. I had never read Wittgenstein until this seminar. Most of the other students were veterans of several Wittgenstein seminars plus the Saturday morning sessions. They were a great help to me as well as the other less experienced readers. But it was Bouwsma's guidance in discussion and particularly in his notebooks which provided me with the second momentous experience in my philosophical life. We began with Section #1 and, characteristically, worked only through the sections in the #30s of that book -- not many more than twenty pages: St. Augustine's view of language, the grocer's "five red apples," "slabs and pillars," "think of meaning as use." There were examples, illustrations, explanations, leading questions. There were wide-ranging discussions of the nature of philosophy and its relation to the philosophers' conception of meaning -- particularly Plato's and Hume's views. Bouwsma was also interested in pointing out to us how the early sections of this book contained the flowering of Wittgenstein's great idea of the "language-game." The notebooks of this seminar were immensely helpful to me in coming to understand Bouwsma as well as Wittgenstein. Many years later when Craft and I were trying to gather some of Bouwsma's notebooks on Wittgenstein, the students from this seminar insisted that we include these notes from the summer of 1965. They -- Wood and Jones -- believed about the seminar that Bouwsma had put on the seminar as a kind of last performance for those who had worked with him so long at Nebraska. It would be his last chance to help them get clear on the central ideas of the book. I, of course, believed it was foundational work for someone just beginning.

Late in the summer of 1965, Bouwsma moved to Austin to begin teaching philosophy in his manner to students at the University of Texas. With him came five graduate students. This was the beginning of thirteen more years of productive teaching and guidance of graduate students. Twelve of those thirteen years he was engaged in a full teaching load which included his discussion group -- in the last year he cut back to meeting his discussion group only. The student interest in his group was always keen in general, but there were several periods where a group of students clustered to make up a corps of those struggling in the battle against "the bewitchment of intelligence by means of language." Erde, Malone, Bill and Lee Gordon, Richards, Boggs, Hamilton, Whalen, and Craft are names of students in later clusters which stand out to me from discussions with the Bouwsmas, but there were many others who repeatedly registered for his graduate seminars and attended discussion groups. Again, there were graduate students from the English Department who would attend as well. And, as at Nebraska where Cedric Evans participated in discussion groups, several philosophy faculty at Texas enjoyed participating in them there too -- Phil Hugly and later Ed Allaire for example.

The engine that made the departmental wheels turn at Texas in those years was John Silber. Silber was the chair and was primarily responsible for bringing not only Bouwsma but many other luminaries to Texas in the 1960s (Hartshorne, Pincoffs, Mourelatos, Lorenzen, Findlay, Lieb, Hartman.) It was Silber who made the arrangements to bring all five Bouwsma students to Texas on government fellowships. Later, he told me that it was one of the "best deals" he made as department chair, but more modestly, I think he meant that we were bright students

and reflected Bouwsma's seriousness. Silber admired and respected Bouwsma, and there were not many people towards whom Silber had that attitude.

The remarkable thing about Silber's respect for Bouwsma was that Silber at that time strongly disapproved of Wittgenstein's influence in philosophy. He thought that Wittgenstein might bring ruin to academic philosophy and to students' education in general. If all problems of philosophy were merely problems of language, if all philosophical problems could be "dissolved," what was left? Wittgenstein's mission, as Silber saw it, was to destroy the attempts of the great philosophers to bring reason's judgment to the great moral decisions of one's life. While the great philosophers were building a foundation for the education of a young mind, Wittgenstein was a Philistine -- trampling roughshod over the great works of Western philosophy. Whence then his admiration and respect for Bouwsma? His attitude had to be based in his perception of Bouwsma's integrity. With Bouwsma one knew by his manner of living and by his manner of speaking that his life and philosophy were congruous. [Bouwsma loved the sentence from Kierkegaard's *Fragments* about Socrates that he "remained true to himself through his manner of life giving artistic expression to what he understood" (12).] Bouwsma appeared as one trying to lead a simple Christian life. And though Silber did not miss a chance to shake a student's orthodoxy, he admired this consistency in Bouwsma. Bouwsma cared about his students and believed that what he did in philosophy mattered to how his students would fare -- and Silber saw and admired this. Silber also must have admired and respected Bouwsma's rapier wit. Bouwsma spared no one the benefit of his wit -- a visiting lecturer, another faculty member, any one of his students -- holding each accountable for what he or she said both in and out of seminars. And Silber, having that same ideal, though using different techniques, surely must have admired it in Bouwsma as well. Silber, to my knowledge, always thought well of Bouwsma in spite of Wittgenstein's influences, and in spite of his orthodox Christianity. But, perhaps, I have overstated these views of Silber on Bouwsma and Christianity. Silber did want Bouwsma to teach Wittgenstein. He believed that philosophy departments should be balanced as well as having excellent advocates of philosophical views. And Silber also had more respect for orthodox Christianity than I have suggested.

The Bouwsma students had a special role at Texas in those first years. We were continually asked to explain what Bouwsma was doing as he was an enigma to students and faculty alike. We were also pressed to explain and defend Wittgenstein as Bouwsma had helped us to understand him. This was difficult though very profitable work for us. We had to take on the responsibility for the ideas and techniques of philosophical discussion completely for ourselves. At Nebraska, we were the majority, but at Texas we were only five of one-hundred plus graduate students in philosophy. Hartshorne had a cadre of students working with him, all of whom were convinced of the truth of Whitehead's philosophy. These students provided the most frequent opportunities for us to practice our Bouwsma techniques. They had the unusual technical vocabulary which we could try to get them to explain. What is an "actual occasion"? How long are they? How many does it take to make a self? How are they connected? Scotch-tape? We could be annoying! We did it with the delight of a defensive back seeding turmoil into an offensive team's well rehearsed play. Of course, we lacked the skill and power which Bouwsma possessed, but these were training grounds. The result was, I feel sure, that we were thought by some to be clownish imitators of someone whom they thought to be destructive of philosophy. Other students had other philosophical

programs from which they assessed Bouwsma and our relationship to him. Silber had a corps of battle-seasoned veterans whom he had trained. Interestingly, these students did philosophy in such a way that it was more natural for us to discuss and argue with them. Though not necessarily sharing a common philosophical perspective, they did share Silber's love for confrontation and engagement in battle. We held our ground well.

Among these students of Silber, incidentally, were Bill Bennett, Ed Delattre, and Dave Solomon. Delattre went on to serve in the administration of the NEH and later became president of St. John's College, Baltimore. Bennett also served the NEH as director, and, of course, became Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration and the so-called "Drug Czar" in the Bush administration. Both Bennett and Delattre, I believe, though sharing Silber's scepticism about Wittgenstein, respected Bouwsma as a philosopher. I remember Bennett being struck by the Socratic aspect of Bouwsma's seminars and with Bouwsma's admiration of Socrates. David Solomon became professor of ethics at Notre Dame and maintained a closer relationship with Bouwsma, acknowledging that he had learned much from his seminars on Wittgenstein.

Bouwsma's work with students at Texas went much the same as it did at Nebraska. I do believe that Bouwsma was a more experienced reader of Wittgenstein at Texas. The *Investigations* was published in 1953, and he worked on it constantly until his death in 1978. By the time he had left Nebraska he had much experience in reading that book along with *On Certainty* and *Zettel*, which did not appear in print until after he had moved to Texas. He worked through these latter books at Texas and continued to teach the *Investigations* regularly as well. His work was more seasoned at Texas. In addition to the length of time reading and the extra books published, his work was also seasoned by the fact that Texas was a much larger department -- some twenty to thirty faculty -- with many different philosophy schools and styles represented by faculty, students, and weekly visitors at department colloquia. He did not ease his attacks on these philosophies or tolerate nonsense, but he seemed more understanding of the fact that there would always be philosophical systems, puzzlement, and nonsense. Perhaps he came slowly to accept that Wittgenstein's influence in philosophy was going to be less persuasive than it first seemed.

Bouwsma taught much more than Wittgenstein seminars at Texas, although he did at least one every year and Wittgenstein's influence could be seen in all of his courses. He taught seminars on G.E. Moore, Pascal, Nietzsche, and on philosophical psychology in which James or Descartes or Hume would be the primary texts. There were seminars in which Plato provided the primary readings, but I do not believe that these seminars were called "Plato." And there were seminars on literary figures such as Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Camus. They might go by such titles as "Existentialism." He would not read Sartre or Heidegger in these seminars, and if he had ever read these and similar writers he pretended that he had not. If one wanted to bring them into a discussion, one had to do a lot of explaining of their technical language and odd forms of expression. He did the same with Hegel, and I know that he did read Hegel seriously as a young man.

The seminars drew students from all corners of the department and from outside the department as his reputation spread. The Saturday morning discussion groups began again, although they sometimes met in the evenings at the Bouwsma's home. Gertrude would prepare fine snacks -- little sausages baked in dough were my favorites -- and serve beer. The Bouwsma's home became a comfortable and

common setting for philosophy. For me, it became my home away from home, and my wife-to-be was several times the house guest of the Bouwsma's when she visited Texas. Everyone felt accepted in discussing philosophy in Bouwsma's presence. Our ideas and our intelligences were constantly challenged, but students were encouraged to talk and to speak from the heart. We were expected to drop our pretensions and to speak our inclinations -- what it seemed right to say -- even if they were wrong. If we spoke our natural instincts or basic pictures, we could then work with that and begin to understand the roots of our philosophical confusions. And so Bouwsma encouraged us to talk, and did not dominate or "beat-up" on anyone. The discussions in his home and in the seminars all created an atmosphere in which we were encouraged to speak in an unguarded manner.

One of the amazing things about Bouwsma was his ability to talk with anyone -- all sorts of philosophers, but all sorts of people in general. Many philosophical schools have vocabularies and presuppositions which make it such that only those philosophers who share those can talk with each other. Not so with Bouwsma. He could break in on anyone's private discussion and, before long, have them trying to explain themselves to him. Some philosophers are so obtuse that it seems impossible to stop them; and question them, not so for Bouwsma. He could ask something so obvious that the discussion became comprehensible and possible to participate in. Students would open up to him in front of other students with examples and illustrations that were personal and therefore realistic. Bouwsma would never respond in ways that were morally judgmental nor that would discourage the student from speaking. One student in an at-home discussion group described the drug induced hallucinations he was having as he stared at the Bouwsma's carpeting. And Bouwsma, who would never have approved of illegal drugs, listened, fascinated by the descriptions, without vocalizing a judgment. He was equally adept at conversation and putting people at ease with non-philosophers as well. Once on a ride with the Bouwsmas in the hills above Berkeley, we became lost and stopped to ask some people for directions. They turned out to be a motorcycle gang with all the appropriate attire. They were, in my judgment, dangerous characters. Bouwsma somehow disarmed their opening jibs, and they were soon chatting with him about Berkeley and all the strange sights and people one could meet there.

I should say about his conversations that none were ordinary. They were not the kind about where one had been or what one had seen or done -- even if they started out in that way. They were playful. Bouwsma would fasten on something a person said, and then take it off in some direction that the speaker did not have in mind -- teasing or playing with the words or idea. And if the person played along, that encouraged him, and he would continue as long as the participant wanted -- and a little longer. My wife, Barbara, and he were immediately drawn to each other because she loved to tease, play with words, and to exchange puns with him. When they first met, he asked her, out of the blue, if she had a brother named "Richard." It turns out, quite accidentally that she does. "How did you know that?" Chuckle. "And you have a sister named Estella?" "No." But Barbara would not tell him her name. This led to his guessing the rest of the evening in between other bits of conversation. He ran through the list of medieval names for the valid syllogisms, since "Barbara" was the first on that list. This guessing went on for at least four or five years. When he would see her or write to me after we left Texas, he would slip in another guess. "Say 'hello' to your wife's sister Rachael for me." Barbara and he joked and punned with each other for most of an evening after dinner about the

little ducks on Gertrude's birthday cake. Later, Gertrude said to me, "He's no good at small talk. It's either this or philosophy." Those alternatives, I came to realize, were not opposed to each other for him. He loved language and all of its surprises. He loved to play with words for the pure enjoyment of it. And his understanding of philosophy was that it was language on a "holiday"; it was the "bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language." Attend to language and all of its surprises and one could gain relief from one's philosophical itchings. With Bouwsma, everything fit together. There were no throw away parts to his thoughts or personality.

The Texas philosophy department was a busy place in the mid-1960s. In addition to the large group of graduate students, prominent philosophers on the faculty, and numerous visiting appointments by other eminent thinkers, there were weekly colloquia on Friday afternoons. The visitor was always a person of some reputation and often was being considered for an appointment in the department. He or she would present a paper to a seminar room filled to capacity with faculty and graduate students. Faculty sat around the table and students around the edges of the room. Students were given a chance to ask questions and discuss the paper with the visitor on Saturday morning -- only faculty participated in the "kill" on Fridays. They were dreadful. It seemed to me that junior faculty were expected to compete with each other for their positions and, generally, the sessions were exercises in cleverness. Bouwsma did not usually say much at these colloquia. I do not know what his attitude toward them was. I think that his reticence on these occasions was due to his conception of discussion as requiring complete seriousness about the problem at hand and a fearlessness about making mistakes. However, on some occasions, usually, I believe, when he was asked to be a respondent or a participant, he would enter into the discussion.

On these occasions he would have something prepared in his notebook and read it. His reading from a prepared text was not as likely to have the dramatic effect that his spontaneous quips and questions in discussion were. Nevertheless, his development of an example or illustration of what someone's position would come to if put into some non-philosophical surroundings could be devastatingly funny and maddening. At a paper by Chisolm containing endless sentences of the form "X says that Y believes P," Bouwsma developed a case where someone believed that the queen was blowing bubble-gum. Bouwsma would not just present a funny idea, he would develop a full length situation comedy, some parts of which were very funny but extraneous to the point. He went on at length about the queen. Chisolm, as had many others in similar circumstances with Bouwsma, lost his patience and complained bitterly about Bouwsma's lack of respect for philosophy. For everyone who loved to hear him perform, there were three who thought him a silly, self-indulgent old man who did not know what was at stake in philosophy. These few occasions when he spoke at colloquia -- like the occasions where he read or responded to papers -- provided the basis for many of the anecdotes which circulated about Bouwsma. I should add that he was not always negative in his responses to other's papers and talks; however those positive responses to other's papers were more easily forgotten. Once when Fredrick Solmsen presented a paper on Aristotle to a Friday colloquium, Bouwsma commented to me beforehand on how well Solmsen wrote. Then he read to me the first paragraph of the paper so that I could hear how well Solmsen wrote. It was a paper that I had read the day before and had noticed nothing special about it, until Bouwsma read some of it aloud.

Then I began to hear the well-formed phrases and the clauses carefully folded into the sentences.

My graduate classes at Texas lasted for only two years. In retrospect, I wish that I had stayed to work with Bouwsma as long as possible. But I was impatient to do philosophy with my own students. I left Texas for The College of Wooster in 1967 without my dissertation completed. Bouwsma's Texas stay was just beginning to flourish, although at the time it looked to the five of us who had come with him that his philosophical influence had peaked and waned with our presence and departure. He became my dissertation advisor, and we conducted much of that business by mail over the next two-and-a-half years. We spent the summer of 1969 together in Berkeley where I wrote the last chapters of my dissertation under his direction. Again the Bouwsmas would have us to their home for meals and visits. They rented a beautiful house in the Berkeley Hills overlooking the bay and San Francisco from their Lincoln friends the Hicks. (John Hicks was an American historian who taught previously at Nebraska and later at Berkeley. The Bouwsmas often spent summers in that house to be near their son Bill, a Renaissance historian at Berkeley, and their daughter Gretchen in Palo Alto.) There were rides in the Berkeley Hills country and several Sunday morning trips to a Christian Reformed church. But it was for the discussions and written responses to my dissertation that I went there. Bouwsma filled a legal pad in his tiny, crabbed handwriting on my explanations of how religious language could have meaning after the logical positivists got through with it. I was good at attacking Ayer and others who dismissed it as nonsense, but how to explain that religious people were not talking nonsense was more difficult for me. Bouwsma kept sending me to the actual language of religious people -- Samuel Johnson's prayers for example -- and, of course, he would send me to Kierkegaard. The dissertation was never as good as it should have been, but the summer at Berkeley made it better. During the next years from 1967 to 1978, I corresponded with the Bouwsmas regularly and visited with them in Austin, in Wooster, and at various philosophical gatherings. Gertrude maintained the correspondence on their end. In fact, she served as the central clearing house for all information about the work and personal news of former graduate students. The various students would write to them from wherever they were in the country and she would write back including news of the others and of Oets. I learned much of his doings -- of his trips, papers, and visits to universities, etc. from those letters. She and I maintained that correspondence until she was no longer able to write. Gertrude was always willing to talk about what Oets did -- honors and work which reflected his importance in philosophy -- in contrast to Oets who would not. One could get nothing of that sort from him. He even avoided having his picture taken. It was Gertrude who told me the most about their relationship with Wittgenstein, and with Anscombe, Moore, Ambrose, and others. Oets wrote it in his notebooks, but would not talk about anything that made him appear important.

At first our philosophical business had primarily to do with my dissertation ("What is the Meaning of Religious Language?"). In January of 1970 I returned to Austin for the oral defense of my dissertation. Again I stayed with the Bouwsmas. There we discussed my dissertation in detail. He approved of, I believe, my examples of religious language -- Johnson and Bonhoeffer. He approved too of my analyses of Ayer's critique of religious language and of my qualified difficulties with Braithwaite's treatment of religious language as reducible to ethical statements. But he was never happy with my direct attempt to explain how religious language

made sense in spite of the fact that it embodied the paradoxical. I now see that it was the task of trying to say in general how some language made sense that he never would have approved of. I was still working with generalities -- how religious language in general had meaning -- and not enough with particular sentences.

Sometime in the early 1970s, Bouwsma was invited by Paul Holmer to read a paper at Yale Divinity School. I was asked to comment on the paper. He read a fine paper on miracles. Miracles were a matter of the heart for the believer. The focus of the concept is not on some unlawful event, but on something that happens in the life of the believer. The one who believes is able to see what happened as a miracle. I was able to complement what he said with some grammatical work in Greek on the New Testament distinction between usages of "belief in" and "belief that." Later that afternoon, we met Ron Jaegar who was then on the philosophy faculty at Yale and a friend of the Bouwsma family. They spoke of family ties. It was to Jaegar that he made the philosophical remark about his son Bill and history. Bill was going to Harvard to teach history. "Bill, now Bill knows something. I don't know anything." He meant that historians are in the business of making discoveries about the past, but philosophers do not make discoveries. And he especially did not make discoveries. He worked with words, assembling and reassembling them to provide sense -- but not knowledge.

In 1974 I was given my first sabbatical leave from Wooster. I made the plans to spend the half-year in Austin with Bouwsma. I believe I was better prepared this time, after seven years of working on Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard and teaching the history of philosophy. I could appreciate Bouwsma's work better because Bouwsma did philosophy by examining what other philosophers said, and I now knew more of what they said. I saw Bouwsma working with graduate students who were some years younger than myself, and I could study that process as well as his understanding of Wittgenstein. He was somehow more patient with his students now -- more accepting of the fact that some good students would never catch on to what he was trying to do in philosophy. At Texas at that time, there were some quite good students with excellent training in philosophy before they met Bouwsma: Herb Granger, William Prior, Phil Rossi, Jimmy Craft. Bill Gordon had finished his degree but still came to the Saturday morning discussions. Prior and Granger were not about to give up philosophy as they knew it for Bouwsma, but they enjoyed the free-swinging, stimulating discussions. Rossi was a Jesuit but found something in Bouwsma's un-Jesuit mind -- seriousness perhaps. But it was in Jimmy Craft that Bouwsma again saw the passion for philosophy in the Wittgensteinian form. Craft could read difficult texts in philosophy and logic and discuss them with simplicity and energy. He intuitively knew what the essential issue was in a book or discussion, and saw in it how the very misconceptions with which Wittgenstein was concerned were illustrated. Bouwsma, anxious for me to meet Craft, remarked to me about him: "He gets it quickly." "It" here referred to those insights into philosophical problems that come from grasping Wittgenstein's understanding of language. These were not insights that could be spelled out in five propositions, but were the sort about which one says "I know how to go on" and does. Such a dawning of understanding comes from work on the *Investigations* with the right guidance and a natural sense that getting philosophy right is more important than what other philosophers think of you. Craft was Bouwsma's last student. Bouwsma, who was coming to retirement at Texas, knew that Craft would be the last. He was, consequently, especially attentive to Craft's development. He loved his easy style of challenging the claims of other students and philosophers. Craft

could also get Bouwsma to talk more directly because of this relationship as last student. In seminars he could get Bouwsma to be less enigmatic and explain himself more. And, in private, he could get Bouwsma to talk about his work, his papers, notebooks, and former students and acquaintances. Craft would ask him about Wittgenstein or Smythies or Malcolm, and Bouwsma would talk. (Craft later spent a summer working with Malcolm at an NEH Summer Seminar on Wittgenstein.) Bouwsma, knew too, that Craft asked these questions because he was serious about philosophy and was not interested in gossip. His openness with Craft proved to be invaluable when Craft and I edited Bouwsma's papers. But in that half year at Texas, we had no such thoughts. We got to know each other through Bouwsma and through our common attendance at Bouwsma's seminar on Wittgenstein and Saturday morning sessions.

Aside from the changes in his students and what I have described as more acceptance or resignation on Bouwsma's part, Bouwsma seemed much the same to me. He was now about seventy-six and many people asked me if I saw any decline in him since I first knew him. I did not. I thought his philosophical writings and discussion were as good as ever. It did become harder for him to hear students in his last years, but he managed to work this into his classroom routine. He would get up and walk over to the person who was talking if he wanted to push that dialogue further. He might chuckle and say that he had some trouble hearing. Now the student had an old man, hard-of-hearing and hard-of-understanding, next to him and had to explain Kant's transcendental apperception of the ego to him. The student would start to speak up and try to explain a little more clearly what he meant. And invariably, when it seemed like he had not heard nor fathomed what was said, the old fox would turn and eat the gingerbread man in a way that revealed that he had heard and followed exactly what was said. His writing, too, was as interesting as ever in these last years. In the Wittgenstein seminars, he produced notebooks as he always did. His papers, those he prepared for reading at some university or conference, were now mostly on religious themes. None of these writings, except for an introduction to a translation of Nietzsche's letters, was written with an eye on publication. I do not believe that Bouwsma ever tried to fit a journal editor's idea of what an article should look like. But in his last years he simply did not write to be published. In any case, I found him to be as quick and as philosophically interesting in these last years as ever.

I had the same sort of relationship with Bouwsma after returning to Wooster as I had before that leave year. We wrote frequently. There was constant news about the students from my era at Nebraska and now of Craft.

Bouwsma retired from official teaching duties at Texas in this period (1977), although he continued meeting discussion groups on Saturday mornings. The department held a celebration in honor of his retirement. I was able to fly to Austin to take part in it. Several of his most recent students read papers about his teaching: Boggs, Hamilton, Craft, and someone else (It may have been Jack Murphy, as he was teaching at Texas then and had comments to make about his debt to Bouwsma). Craft spoke of Bouwsma having a divine mission not unlike Socrates', and of his singleness of purpose. After the principal speakers, people from the audience rose to speak in tribute to Bouwsma's life as a teacher and philosopher, but it became obvious how difficult it was to capture the character, the insights, the elfish spirit, the religious seriousness, etc. of this man. I was able to relate an insightful story which the poet William Stafford had told me about a Bouwsma seminar that he had attended. Stafford had been to Wooster to give a poetry reading. In between the

poems, he would make some remarks about the mysteries of language. In these interludes he began talking of O.K. Bouwsma and quoting some remarks of his on language. Stafford had come to know of Bouwsma through Stafford's colleague at Lewis and Clark College, Kenneth Johnson, who was Bouwsma's former student and long time corresponding friend. When Stafford had given a poetry reading at Texas, he made a point of coming around to see Bouwsma. He was able to sit in on a seminar. Bouwsma opened by saying that somehow the chancellor of the university had come to the belief that he [Bouwsma] knew how to help students with their philosophical problems, and that the chancellor was willing to pay Bouwsma for doing this. Bouwsma was not sure how the chancellor came to believe this, but he was in any case prepared to do what he could to help. So he was there, prepared to try, if anyone had a philosophical problem. Stafford then said that Bouwsma sat quietly and waited patiently. Even after someone presented a problem, and the discussion followed its course, Bouwsma said relatively little in the rest of the seminar but only listened. And then Stafford gave me a fine, one-line description of Bouwsma: "He didn't say much, but I never saw anyone listen like that before!" That is a poet's line. He could listen in a way that called attention to listening. Even the speaker began to listen to himself. The tributes went on, but I think that everyone sensed that it was difficult to say briefly or at length what Bouwsma had accomplished or meant to them. Perhaps we should not have tried. But then again, we were obliged to try. Lee Gordon presented a paper the next day at a colloquium as part of the occasion. It was not about Bouwsma, but was meant to reflect Bouwsma's influence on Gordon's grasp of an issue. His subject was the criteria for a word's changing meaning in another possible world. There was discussion and the students gathered went back to the activity of philosophy. Bouwsma had a discussion group that night. This seemed to be a more fitting kind of retirement celebration. Socrates discussed immortality with his students on his last day in the same manner as he had discussed this and other topics with them on many previous occasions.

I was to see Bouwsma on one last occasion of this sort in the fall of 1977. Richard Bell, my colleague at Wooster and former student of Paul Holmer, and I were able to organize a conference at Wooster on the conjunction of the philosophies of Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard. We pulled the resources of as many former students of Holmer and Bouwsma as possible. Holmer, who was a long-time admirer of Bouwsma, and Bouwsma were both able to come and to present papers. Bouwsma sent three papers at different times for the conference -- all three on religious themes. The first was on the then currently popular topic "Is Belief in God Rational?" This was a lively working through of Plantinga's discussion of the topic in which Bouwsma took time to consider how the word "rational" gets used. "Rational" and "irrational" are often corollaries. How is the word "irrational" used? The second paper was called "Lengthier Zettel" and was a collection of longer fragments on why reading Kierkegaard was still relevant. We are consumed and stunted in our growth by the blind desire to increase knowledge. We make more and more discoveries but loose track of the essential questions of life. Kierkegaard warns against this objectivity and urges us to be subjective thinkers. This was the paper Bouwsma finally decided on for the conference. The third paper was called "A Lengthy Zettel." It was a fine little piece on philosophy of religion in which he portrayed philosophers of religion as treating the subject of God as an abstraction and a generalization. But there is no God in general and in the abstract. There are only particular gods with specific names and specific histories found in

specific holy writings. These gods cannot be known apart from these specifics. There is no god in general. As far as I know, this was the last paper that Bouwsma wrote. He sent it to me in January after the conference and died the next month. He sent it in response to my asking if I might publish all the papers he wrote for the conference. The new paper, he requested, should stand in place of the paper which he wrote on Plantinga called "Is Belief in God Rational?" -- he did not say why.

Bouwsma was in good form at the conference. He and Murphy and Craft stayed in our home. Although Bouwsma did not participate much in the discussions of the papers, he did talk philosophy with us afterwards. He was interested in my descriptions of reading Paley's teleological argument with students in a natural history course done while on a canoe trip in the Adirondacks Park. And then Jensen had stirred up a hornet's nest at the conference with a paper developing Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein's shared animosity towards journalism. Jensen seasoned his paper with his own dislike of the contemporary press. This aroused considerable liberal sentiment against him. At the discussion most wanted to defend both their own liberal political instincts and their idealized picture of Wittgenstein. Bouwsma did not object to this at the time, but he defended Jensen in our discussion later saying with emphasis: "If they think that Wittgenstein was a liberal Democrat, they are wrong!" Bouwsma was not expressing his own political views in this remark. He meant that he knew what sort of maverick thinker Wittgenstein was -- of his intentions at one time to immigrate to the Soviet Union, for example. In the discussion of his own paper, Bouwsma took up the image of the lace-maker in Kierkegaard. The lace-maker makes beautiful lace but neglects to attend to his own beauty and well-being. Bouwsma liked the image because he thought it applied to scholars who made knowledge but neglected to take care of their own spiritual health. "Who will make something out of me?" Craft read a paper in response to Bouwsma on the same theme of subjectivity vs. objectivity in Kierkegaard. Here, those who wanted to object to Bouwsma's interpretation of Kierkegaard were able to vent their frustrations on Craft. Both Bouwsma and Craft enjoyed the task of keeping Kierkegaard's categorical distinctions clear and forceful. Some felt safer trying to blur those distinctions with Craft, but Craft was fine in discussion and kept the concepts of subjectivity and objectivity clear and distinct, as Kierkegaard intended. Craft's response as well as Bouwsma's papers and the others from the conference were published in a volume entitled: *Essays on Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein*, edited by Richard Bell and myself.

Several days after the conference, I drove Bouwsma, Craft, and Murphy back to the Cleveland airport for their return flight to Texas. At one point the highway passed into a valley with woods on both sides. The leaves were bright yellow in every direction and the yellow light reflected off of everything. Bouwsma noted with delight the beautiful fall colors. This was to be my last meeting with him. We talked by phone about which papers he wanted included in the volume that was to come out of the conference, and he sent me the piece which I described above -- "A Lengthy Zettel." In February, Gertrude wrote saying that Oets had had a coronary and was hospitalized. Having the symptoms, he went to the doctor who sent him to the hospital. Thinking he would have some time to read there, she brought him his book of T.S. Elliot's *Essays* for the stay. Several weeks later he died. Murphy and Jensen both called to tell me of his passing -- Jensen, at three o'clock in the morning from Flagstaff with no preliminaries, simply said "He's dead." I did not need to ask who. It affected all of us like the death of a father. And that was not

because he was an uncommonly excellent philosopher, which he was, but because he held our well-being in his heart.

There were two memorial services held -- one in Austin at the University Presbyterian Church and the other in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the chapel of Calvin College. The Texas and Arizona friends came to the Austin service. I went to the one at Calvin. Alvin Plantinga and David Freeman, another philosopher friend, each gave eulogies. Morris Lazerowitz, who was one of Bouwsma's first students, Elmer Sprague, and David Solomon made the trip to Calvin. The Bouwsma family collected at Chuck Bouwsma's house in Grand Rapids, and the body was taken later that afternoon to Muskegon for a family graveside service and burial.

At Chuck Bouwsma's I met Angelyn Stevens, Oet's sister. She was married to an English professor at Michigan. Her facial features resembled Oet's and she had the same gentleness that he possessed. Angelyn and her husband "Steve" were friends of W. H. Auden, and are sometimes mentioned in biographies of Auden. Auden apparently admired their Christian piety and faith. Angelyn began telling me stories of Oet's youth. I remember two. At a very young age, perhaps six or seven, he had made up nonsense poems where the words made no sense but rhymed and had the sound of language that did make sense. She had memorized them and recited one for me. The idea that he came by that love of language and that sensitivity for sense and nonsense naturally was interesting to me. I doubt if it was Wittgenstein who quickened his ear for nonsense in philosophy. It is more likely that Wittgenstein showed him the significance of paying attention to a natural gift that was already there. The second story was that of an argument Oets had with their father. During a summer between years of graduate work at Michigan, Oets and Gertrude worked for Oet's father who at that time owned a golf course in Michigan. Oet's job was to water the greens and tend the course generally. He managed to find time to read philosophy between sprinklings. In return his father gave them room and board. They slept in a cabin on the property and ate with the family at the main house. At dinner one night the talk turned to Darwin and evolution. Oets was explaining and defending Darwin's theory to the consternation of his father. Their father finally had enough of it, and pronounced that he would not eat with someone who believed him descended from a monkey. From then, Oets and Gertrude had to take their meals to the cabin to eat. Angelyn did not say how long this crisis lasted.

Bouwsma's papers were collected from his house in Austin by Gertrude, some family, and Craft. These were composed primarily of legal pads on which he worked and typescripts of notebooks and papers. The letters and more personal writings were gone through later by the family. Gertrude later sent Craft and me various letters and pictures as they related to our editing work. The papers were deposited at the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas after some discussion of the appropriate place for them. Bill Bouwsma became the executor of the literary estate. For the first several years, they remained in the grocery boxes in which Craft and Gertrude had packed them. Jack Murphy was given a leave from Trinity University in order to work on the papers. He separated the typescript papers from the manuscript note pads. The typescripts he further separated into papers that were presented to various philosophical groups and copies of seminar notes that had been prepared to pass out to students. The papers prepared for formal philosophical groups were placed in folders and given numbers. He began to index the legal pads by indicating the subjects discussed in a given pad, but this

was a hopeless task as there were six large boxes of pads going back to c. 1950. He did not get very far with the indexing project. Murphy culled out fragments from the notebooks, ranging from a sentence to several paragraphs in length. He organized these trying to capture the spirit of the unique philosopher Bouwsma was. But this, predictably in my judgment, was a failure. Bouwsma's notebooks were lengthy and patient developments of someone else's sentences or passages. They were not aphorisms or polished fragments. Readers would have been bewildered by what they saw if they had not known Bouwsma in a seminar. Publishers refused to publish Murphy's book, rightly I believe. Murphy took this hard, because he had a fixed idea on this matter and because he had put so much of his time into the project.

Some time during Murphy's work, Craft and I began talking about collecting and publishing those finished papers which Bouwsma wrote to be read at conferences and at the invitation of various philosophy departments. We knew that by ignoring the notebooks, we were passing over what Bouwsma regarded as his most important writing. But our task was relatively straight forward by comparison to Murphy's. I wrote to Bill Bouwsma asking permission to proceed with the project, and he gave us that permission. I visited the collection in Austin, and Murphy, who was there working, graciously showed me how he was organizing the materials and what he was trying to do with his project. I explained our project to him, and we discussed it primarily with regard to its being a basic task in the work to be done on the collection.

From 1979 to 1986, Craft and I selected, corrected grammatical and other errors, and wrote introductions to the papers which Bouwsma had not published himself. Most of these he had written after his first and only book of published essays, but some were available for him to have published in the first book. The implication of the latter fact is that he chose not to publish them. I do not think that it was because they contained views that he no longer held or that they were inferior. Most of the papers which we published, however, were left unpublished by him because he simply lost interest in publishing anything. He did not see publishing articles as a significant mode of philosophizing. It is impossible to think of his lively, imaginative, and earthy style being accepted by any philosophy journal as an article. We separated the papers which we chose for publication into two groups and eventually into two books. The first group consisted of papers on philosophical themes with no direct connections to religious themes. These came out in the volume called *Toward a New Sensibility*. The second group involved religious themes and these appeared as *Without Proof or Evidence*. Both were published by Nebraska Press which simultaneously reissued Bouwsma's first book *Philosophical Essays*.

We decided against publishing the John Locke Lectures which he had given at Oxford in 1950 and several other papers, including the diaries on conversations he had with Wittgenstein. After two editors approached us requesting permission to publish the Wittgenstein conversations, both having copies of those notes, we, in conjunction with Bill Bouwsma, decided that it was time to rethink the decision not to publish them. Bouwsma had cautiously circulated those notes and was particularly concerned that some personal remarks about common friends which he and Wittgenstein shared would be misunderstood. We did our best to delete these in the editing. They appeared in 1986 under the title *Wittgenstein Conversations 1949-51*, published by Hackett Press. The lengthy introduction to these notes was especially rewarding to prepare as their history is intertwined with some of the major developments of twentieth century philosophy. We had letters to help us

reconstruct the period from Morris Lazerowitz, Norman Malcolm, and Thomas Stoneborough (Wittgenstein's nephew), and Gertrude Bouwsma. Kenneth Johnson, a former student and life-long friend, wrote some very helpful letters to us and sent with them some correspondence which Bouwsma had written to him in the period following his time with Wittgenstein. (Bouwsma had a two year leave from teaching at Nebraska in 1949-51.) These correspondences give a fascinating picture of Bouwsma as he struggled to come to an understanding of Wittgenstein. The John Locke Lectures were from this period as well and should be read as the lectures of one trying to work out the implications of Wittgenstein's understanding of language for the concept of mind in the recent history of philosophy.

The current status of the Bouwsma papers is the following: The Humanities Research Center in Austin holds the collection and is responsible for its maintenance and use by visiting scholars. Librarians there have filed each note pad and separable typescript in clear plastic shields and placed them in standard file boxes. They are in chronological order dating from c. 1950 (the time of his meetings with Wittgenstein) to 1978. I have prepared an index for these note pads which is currently on file at the Humanities Research Center. The index lists the dates of the first and last entries in each pad and the topics discussed in that pad. Pads are identified by numbers which indicate the file box and individual pad within the box. I have urged the librarians to microfilm the collection to protect it from the inevitable rapid deterioration of the paper in those legal pads. Unfortunately, the Bouwsma collection, mixed in with the collections of such great writers and personal favorites as Elliot and Auden, is not currently a high priority in the backlog of microfilming. The remainder of the collection beyond the legal pad notebooks, includes the typescript papers (most of which have been published), the unexpurgated Wittgenstein conversations, the John Locke Lectures (both the original hand-written and my edited and introduced typescript copy), letters pertaining mostly to the occasions of the typescript papers, miscellaneous papers by friends, newspaper clippings, and five rolls of microfilmed journals going back to 1925. These, too, are filed in the same manner as the note pads, with the exception of the microfilm. There are a few papers that Bouwsma read or published which are not in the collection at Austin. The originals of the microfilmed notebooks and, I assume, other personal papers are kept by the Bouwsma family. Gretchen Bouwsma has some letters from Wittgenstein, and there are some other correspondence from various philosophical friends which Gertrude had in her possession. A "DIALOGUE" search through the Philosophical Documentation Center now reveals numerous articles about or citing Bouwsma's works, along with several of Bouwsma's published papers, which are not contained in the collection. At a conference on Bouwsma's work held at Drake University in October, 1990, several participants mentioned they had tapes of Bouwsma giving talks at philosophy gatherings; these were subsequently presented to the Humanities Research Center. This list of contents and whereabouts of papers is not meant to be the official inventory of the collection, but rather a projection of a picture of the collection -- what its scope and unconformities are -- as of the time of the preparation of this book, 1992.

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Bouwsma's Paradox

Morris Lazerowitz and Alice Ambrose have written a book entitled *Essays in the Unknown Wittgenstein*. Taken together the essays of the book put forward an unknown or perhaps deliberately forgotten Wittgenstein -- a philosopher who set out to understand why philosophy from the Greeks to the present continually results in contradictory claims, dilemmas, and the absence of agreement and progress. Several of the papers in this book make reference to what Morris Lazerowitz calls "Bouwsma's paradox," one paper even bears that title, and most of the book treats the theme to which Bouwsma's paradox relates. I want to explain very briefly the essentials of what Morris Lazerowitz calls "Bouwsma's paradox." Then I will use this paradox to organize and present some themes from Bouwsma's writings in a way that shows something essential about Bouwsma's philosophy.

To state Bouwsma's paradox Lazerowitz presents this quote from Bouwsma's paper "Reflections on Moore's Recent Book":

The traveler goes far away. He visits, and he tells about what others have not seen. He tells us about what is covered by great distances, about what is hidden from eyes that stay at home. Let us say then that the traveler describes the hidden, and that this is also what the philosopher does. But the hidden is now obviously of a different sort; for whereas sailors sail the seas, the philosopher stays at home. (*Philosophical Essays* 134)

Bouwsma himself does not use the expression "Bouwsma's paradox" or even "paradox," but simply regards it as an interesting contrast. The traveler travels and reports home on what he has found -- discoveries, but the philosopher who reports on his discoveries has not traveled. He has stayed at home in his study. It comes as no surprise that the philosopher does this, and yet it is surprising, perhaps even "paradoxical." How does one make discoveries about what things exist in the world without leaving one's study? What makes this question an expression of a paradox is the idea that discoveries involve finding out what is not known -- seeing, hearing, finding new facts about the world. Philosophers talk and write as if what they are doing is discovering existing things such as sense-data, universals, and apriori concepts. These are on a parallel, or seem so to Bouwsma, with discovering a new species of plant or an unknown island. But reports of travelers of such discoveries take the form of empirical propositions: "There are wild grapes everywhere." This now too is the form of the philosopher's proposition: "There are sense-data everywhere." So, as the forms of expression are similar, so too ought the methods of discovery to be similar. The philosopher should sail the seas, explore the land, and set up laboratories to test propositions -- but he does not, "the philosopher stays at home."

Morris Lazerowitz believes that in formulating this paradox Bouwsma has created an occasion for a philosopher to gain a clear view of philosophical disputes. That clear view is essentially the same as the one Wittgenstein helped his students to, particularly in *The Blue Book*. So Bouwsma's paradox presents an understanding of Wittgenstein's task and that is both Lazerowitz's and Ambrose's interest in it. Both, of course, were also students and friends of G. E. Moore's. Throughout his essays in their book, Morris Lazerowitz is fond of quoting the

following remark of Moore's in a letter to a friend: "Philosophy is a terrible subject: the more I go on with it, the more difficult it is to say anything at all about it which is both true and worth saying. You can never feel that you have finished with any philosophical question whatever: got it finally right, so that you can pass on to something else" (*Essays in the Unknown Wittgenstein* 122). What struck Morris Lazerowitz about this remark is that Moore, who made discoveries and put forward, with great ability, philosophical propositions of his own, could in a private moment despair of getting anything settled in philosophy. How could Moore -- one of the greatest philosopher's of this century -- harbor such despair over philosophy's progress? No one, Lazerowitz believes, will solve the disputes which philosophers have argued over for centuries. "Throughout its entire history," he writes, "as a reasoned discipline philosophy has been unable to establish a single uncontested proposition: intractable disagreements cluster around every one of its claims" (122).

Lazerowitz is thinking here of such disputes between philosophers as those over sense-data, universals, freedom of the will, and the existence of God. One philosopher claims to have discovered sense-data on the surfaces of everything. Another philosopher comes to deny this. And yet both are looking at the same envelopes, apples, tables, and tomatoes. What is visible to one is invisible to another. What is intuitively obvious to one is inconceivable to another. One philosopher sees universals in the mind's eye, another can only see a particular idea which represents a general idea. One sees human freedom in all actions, another only causal connections. One sees the work of God everywhere, another only accidents. And yet these opposing philosophers see, in one sense, the same world. It is not as if one has traveled out of his study to some far off island and seen what no other philosopher has ever seen. The philosopher has stayed at home, looking at ordinary envelopes, tables, and apples.

Wittgenstein saw this endless state of disputation into which philosophy had fallen and, according to both Lazerowitz and Ambrose, set out in mid-life (*The Blue Book*) to address this sorry state of affairs. Philosophical propositions were not the empirical propositions they appeared to be -- not the reports of discoveries. About such propositions there could be disputes, but there could also be resolutions of the disputes by one or the other side's being confirmed or falsified, etc. Neither should these propositions be taken for necessary truths, as they might also be. ("All desires are selfish," Alice Ambrose says, is taken by Hobbes as a necessary truth ["Discourse on Method"].) In connection with necessary truths, those of mathematics for example, again we get the truth or falsity of a proposition established by the rules of the game of mathematics. But the truth of philosophical propositions are not thus established nor are they established by any other means. So what are they if not empirical nor necessary? They are, Wittgenstein attempts to show, expressions of philosophical confusion. Such propositions as "There are material objects"; "The world is only idea"; "Time is not real"; "Thinking is an event in the brain"; and "All desires are selfish" are expressions of conceptual confusion. They are expressions of felt needs to invent new notations because old notations seem to have failed us. But the new notations do not make sense, as sense is the exclusive property of our old notations -- of our ordinary language. "But ordinary language is alright" (*The Blue Book* 28). The explanation of how the old notations have failed us -- through misleading analogies, etc. -- is a major part of Wittgenstein's task in *The Blue Book*. The showing of the confusions of philosophical propositions, the showing of how the ordinary uses of words are usurped by philosophers for their new purposes, and this task of uncovering the

sources of the philosopher's confusions becomes the essential feature of Wittgenstein's radical explanation of the failure of philosophy to make progress. The philosopher is productive of propositions which look like empirical or necessary propositions, but are in reality neither -- having the illusory appearance of sense.

This understanding of the state of philosophy is what Lazerowitz and Ambrose see as being well captured by Bouwsma's paradox. The philosopher seems to be making discoveries as scientists or explorers would. Bouwsma compares the discoveries of Moore to those of Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver. What did they discover? -- "melons and grapes and sense-data." And is there not something queer about such discoveries being lumped together? How did Moore come to say that there were sense-data? He did not travel as Crusoe and Gulliver did. Moore did it in his study, and he did it with words. Moore explored words to find sense-data. Bouwsma attempts to retrace the paths through the words by which Moore came to his discovery. But the important idea to grasp here is that Bouwsma is following Wittgenstein's lead in trying to show the nonsense of the philosophical proposition. What looks like an empirical discovery is not. What looks like sense is not. Bouwsma's paradox is Wittgenstein's account of the derailment of philosophy. And Lazerowitz and Ambrose are to be thanked for bringing this insight into focus in their book.

I want now to use this idea of Lazerowitz and Ambrose, Bouwsma's paradox, to organize and present something central to what Bouwsma understood of Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy. This might have been done in several different ways, but the idea of Bouwsma's paradox will do nicely for my purpose. In keeping track of themes that Bouwsma writes about in his published and unpublished papers, I have noticed several which stand out as topics to which he returns repeatedly. I am thinking of the following in particular: 1) Everywhere, from the time Alice Ambrose showed him Wittgenstein's dictations, Bouwsma wrote on the question: What is the meaning of a word? Sometimes he varied the question to: What is meaning? He returned to this question over and over in his notebooks, in his seminars, and in his papers which he published or simply distributed to his classes. They bear titles which show his fascination, perhaps obsession, with the question: "What is Meaning?"; "Failure II: Meaning ... Is ... Use"; "Notes on the meaning of a word"; "On Meaning"; and so on. 2) Bouwsma distinguished between conceptual and factual investigations. Philosophy was not composed by making factual investigations. It is composed rather by making conceptual investigations. But conceptual investigations are fraught with confusions. This is not to say that one can never get clear of the confusions in conceptual investigations. That is the task of philosophy when it is well done. There are separate papers on this theme such as "Conceptual vs. Factual Investigations" and the "Mystery of Time," but for the most part the theme is found scattered throughout Bouwsma's papers. This would include his interesting earlier paper "Naturalism," and many notes where he contrasts what scientists do with what philosophers do. 3) Bouwsma did not refute philosophical theories and propositions. Some have said in astonishment that he was a philosopher who did not put forward arguments. That claim needs some qualification, but gets at the same point about refutation. He did not argue for some philosophical thesis over against some other thesis. This was an essential part of his understanding of philosophy. At times he would reflect directly on the fact that refutation was not a part of what he took the job of the philosopher to be. Refutations are a part of the

misunderstandings which have caused the derailment of philosophy. Two of those specifically self-conscious reflections on refutation are "Berkeley's Idealism" and "Achilles and the Tortoise." But again, the theme is found everywhere implicitly and frequently explicitly. I should add to this that his taking issue with Ryle in "A Difference between Ryle and Wittgenstein" is over this idea of refutation as well.

There are plenty of other themes and topics in Bouwsma's papers. He often writes directly about some philosopher trying to understand some passage or sentence of that writer. Why does he make so much of single sentences in his papers? Bouwsma worked on themes in Moore, Hume, Descartes, and others. But these three themes present enough diversity for me for the present. They transcend interests in any given philosopher, unless that philosopher would be Wittgenstein. They all have to do with Bouwsma's conception of philosophy. And, as Bouwsma did not write books or a book explaining what his conception of philosophy was, the reader of his papers, published and unpublished, is confronted with a diversity of themes which demonstrate a method of philosophizing, there is no overall guide written by Bouwsma which organizes and presents an overview of what his papers were about. Bouwsma tried something like this for the diversity of remarks found in Wittgenstein's *The Blue Book*, which he called "The Blue Book." And so I, feeling this same sort of need for these diverse themes in Bouwsma's writings, have designed to tie them together in a way that shows the relationships between these themes and between the themes and the central idea in Bouwsma's conception of philosophy -- namely that idea captured in Bouwsma's paradox.

Let me begin by first formulating a very general description of the centrality of Bouwsma's paradox to these themes. According to Lazerowitz and Ambrose, Bouwsma's paradox expresses something central to Wittgenstein's radical reconception of philosophy which he begins to develop in *The Blue Book*. The latter begins with the question: "What is the meaning of a word?" It is the very first sentence of the book and has a startling effect upon the reader. It had that effect on Bouwsma and as he began to see its significance, he returned to it over and over again. At first he wanted to understand it, and later when he did, he saw that it was central to what Wittgenstein saw was wrong with philosophy. Philosophy as it had been practiced, including by Wittgenstein himself, was based on a misunderstanding of the workings of our language. There is no such thing as "the meaning of a word," and the question itself is confused. That is the geological fault by which the book shakes the foundations of philosophy. Now if one sees philosophical questions and propositions as conceptual confusions, then one's task in philosophy is radically altered. One would no longer put forward such philosophical propositions, as one had, arguing for them and refuting competing claims. One would, rather, try to understand how the propositions of philosophers failed to make sense, how they compared to what did make sense, how one could come to propose what did not make sense, and what the criteria for sense and nonsense was. And these are precisely the tasks which Bouwsma set for himself. The connection of these tasks is the connection of three themes of his papers: 1) His attention to the question of meaning; 2) His distinguishing conceptual and factual investigations and; 3) His refusal to engage in refutation of philosophical propositions. Bouwsma's paradox is an expression of the connection between these three themes of his papers. The philosopher produces what looks like empirical propositions -- and yet never leaves his study -- because he does not distinguish between conceptual and factual investigations. He does not understand that his discoveries are based on a misunderstanding of the concept of "the meaning of a word." And the statement

of the philosopher's discoveries will continue to seem contradictory to the discoveries of other philosophers, the result of which will be that the philosopher will continue to stay at home proposing and refuting claims. I might add that Bouwsma understood that this philosopher would not be talked out of his study easily. He knew that he could not simply say: "Here is an argument for why you should come out of your study. Stop what you are doing and come out." But he did believe that some such philosophers might, with humor, be teased out of their studies. One could, Wittgenstein remarked, write a philosophy book which consisted of jokes. Bouwsma took that remark seriously.

I have given a brief general account of the connection of these three themes in Bouwsma's papers and the thread of their organization by means of the idea of Bouwsma's paradox. I would now like to take up each of the themes in more detail, considering various relevant papers, in order to better appreciate what Bouwsma's new conception of philosophy was after his work on Wittgenstein.

1

The first theme again is that of meaning -- of Bouwsma's fascination for Wittgenstein's question: "What is the meaning of a word?" I have said that Bouwsma came to see the question as confused and that there is no such thing as "the meaning of a word." This, of course, does not mean that any given word is nonsense. The problem with the question might be seen if one first replaces it with the question "What is the meaning of the word 'izba'?" for example -- the log cabin of a Russian peasant (*Toward A New Sensibility*, "Failure II: Meaning Is Use" 89). The replacement question, which looks much like the question of *The Blue Book*, brings immediate relief from the puzzlement felt by the first question. And why is it, Bouwsma wants to know, that one knows how to answer the replacement question but feels puzzlement at the first question? What is it that one does not know in the first case that one does know in the second?

The replacement question asks about some specific word, and there are, in connection with asking for the meaning of some word whose meaning we do not know, patterns for giving an explanation of the meaning of that word. But those patterns of giving an explanation of the meaning of a specific unfamiliar word are not applicable to a question which asks for the meaning of a word in general. The meaning of "a word in general" -- what is that? Here it may look like one is asking for something general in connection with every word. Every word has a meaning, one is inclined to say, and the meaning of the word is the thing for which the word stands. If we ignore here those patterns for explaining the meaning of some specific word, patterns which reveal that we are explaining the uses of a word when we give an explanation of its meaning, then we are, by this blind spot, left with a blank that one can only fill by thinking, i.e. as opposed to looking. And in our thought we reckon that there must be a single kind of thing which a word stands for. "Table" stands for something seen and touched. "Apple" stands for something tasted. "Sad" stands for something touched internally, as "belief" stands for some internal attitude. So the meaning of a word some philosophers say -- empiricists -- is the sense-data for which the word stands. Bouwsma's John Locke Lectures as well as other notes and papers explore this path into empiricism from the question of meaning.

These same sources also explore the path into Platonism from this question of meaning. Bouwsma puts forward the question "What is meaning?" or "What is the meaning of a word?" as having the form of the Platonic question for the hidden

essence behind appearances. What is virtue? What is piety? What is beauty? What is meaning? These questions all ask for what is common to the manifold uses of a word. Knowing what is common, the questioner assumes, is knowing the essence or essential concept behind the many uses of the word. This essence seems mysterious and hidden from immediate view. The immediate uses of words are not puzzling. We know how one person exhibits courage, another piety. We recognize someone as beautiful. And we know what to say if a child asks for the meaning of a familiar word. But when we are asked "What is justice or piety or meaning?" we feel a dislocating puzzlement. We know the word and yet we are unable to explain something -- What? -- behind it. Something seems mysterious. Bouwsma returned repeatedly to this idea of the mysterious which arises out of the question: What is X? Wittgenstein used St. Augustine's remark about knowing and not knowing about "time." And Bouwsma liked to work on that case from Wittgenstein, e.g. "The Mystery of Time" and "Conceptual vs. Factual Investigations."

"What is meaning?" like Plato's questions asks for something hidden -- something not immediately apparent. There are all the cases of asking for the meaning of words that we do not know, and in such cases, we may be said to know what meaning is. But what is meaning in general -- not the specific cases of the meaning of "izba" or "eschew" or "odious"? One feels a puzzlement or senses that there is something mysterious about meaning. This is the same puzzlement which Socrates' patients felt when he asked them not for the virtue of some particular person, occasion, or station, but for virtue itself -- apart from any of the particulars.

The question makes us look for one thing -- for some one thing. It makes us look for a thing. Wittgenstein: "We are up against one of the great sources of philosophical bewilderment: a substantive makes us look for a thing that corresponds to it" (*The Blue Book* 1). Bouwsma explored the many ways in which we were led to look for the thing behind the word. But the primary way by which he explored this path between word and thing was by means of this question: What is X? What is common to all cases of virtue? What is common to all cases of meaning? The meaning of the word "virtue" is a something -- an idea in the mind -- common to all the different uses. Now Plato did not ask about the meaning of "meaning," but his questions about "virtue" and "justice" etc. presupposed a conception of meaning, i.e. a conception of "the meaning of a word." Plato's conception of meaning, presupposed by the form of the question "What is meaning?" was that the meaning of a word was a common, invisible (insensible) thing which the word named. This thing, Plato went on to theorize, was a real and eternal something, existing independently of the visible, sensible world. This visible world only copies it, etc. And our language only names the objects in that real world, and that too is why, according to Plato, we are not to trust our ordinary language on these matters.

The path to looking for a thing as the meaning of a word does not proceed exclusively by way of the Platonic question: What is the meaning of a word? In the many times in which Bouwsma returned to the question, he tried to unveil as many of the tempting analogies which mislead philosophers as he could. His essay "What is meaning?" in particular, attempts to identify some important misleading analogies in this regard. Those documented here have to do with distinguishing language and meaning. The picture they create is that language and meaning are separate and distinct entities -- language over here and meaning there. 1) We are, he thinks, inclined to think of language as the dress or vestiture of thought. Thought

happens in our heads unspoken, unarticulated, and then language, later, is the appearance or presentation of that thought. 2) Language is also like a window through which one must look to see thought or meaning. The language may be cloudy or dark and one peers through it to see what one really means. 3) Words are packed with meaning. Words carry more meaning than their meager size suggests. They bear meaning like an ant bears a burden much bigger than one would guess it could. And there are numerous metaphors of language being the conduit of meaning. 4) Words are charged with meaning. They are powerful, energized. They make things happen because they are more than dead sounds or marks. And what is this energy, this life that accompanies them? It is their meaning which has this power.

A common conception of the relation of language and meaning is that language is used to communicate meaning. And now it appears to be like sound waves or wires with senders, receivers, and conduits. But the meaning is something else. It cannot be the conduit, but what the conduit carries. So language is thought of as the conduit or vehicle of meaning, and so again we get language over here and meaning over there. This analogy makes the word and the meaning appear to be different things. In the Twentieth Century, particularly after the logical positivists, some philosophers operating under the influence of this analogy have come to be puzzled by the fact that the sense of a sentence can be captured by different sentences. They notice, for example, that "It is raining," "Il pleut," and "Es regnet," are different sentences but all have the same sense. Some conclude from this that sense is a separate entity from and not identical with the sentence used to express it. Bouwsma avoided the technical ways of expressing the problem that is usually associated with this example and represented their thinking instead by an allusion to classical literature. Lady Diotima has told Socrates about love (*Symposium*). Socrates in turn tells his friends at the dinner party. Jowett has translated what Lady Diotima has said and Socrates passed on, and we now read and understand Jowett's translation of it. How can that be? Something has been passed along from Lady Diotima to us, and we who do not know Greek have grasped the meaning. Meaning must be something special -- something above and beyond sound waves, marks, or sentences -- something beyond language. And here again meaning looks mysterious; it looks as if it floats above our sentences like a spirit. A sentence one can see, but what is meaning?

Here is another hidden analogy which makes us look for an object as the meaning of a word. When we ask for the meaning of some specific word, we are frequently given help by means of an ostensive definition. What is the meaning of "Ptarmigan"? And someone points to the bird in the back of the cage. The meaning of a word is the thing which the word refers to. The act of pointing to a thing to give a definition, whatever the thing is, seems to confirm this supposition that the meaning is the thing which the name refers to. And here Bouwsma teases the analogy with the question "Do meanings have feathers?" One asks for the meaning and is given a bird. But one is supposed to see the meaning in the bird. It is not the Ptarmigan itself which is being pointed to; it is the essence of Ptarmigan, and certainly not the feathers, which is being pointed to. Again, there is something mysterious about this idea of pointing to the bird or the essence of the bird as the meaning. What is meaning?

Here yet is another tact which Bouwsma takes on exposing the hidden analogies leading to the supposition that meaning is a thing. In some typed notes distributed to a seminar titled "Notes on the meaning of a word," he takes notice of

the grammatical form of the question "What is the meaning of a word?" (Notebooks October 1970). If the question had been "What is the meaning of the word 'X'?" there would have been no puzzlement. Just as the question of the similar form "What is the price of this lettuce?" presents no puzzlement. But when it is asked in general, it does present puzzlement and does so because it has removed itself from any particulars which could serve as the basis for an answer to it. It is as if one asked "What is the price of something?" Which thing? Anything?! How can there be a price of no specific item? Price is set in conjunction with particular items which are on sale. And so too the meaning of a word is a function of some specific word. We can no more ask for the meaning of words in general than we can ask for the price of items in general. And what are we left with if we proceed with asking the question "What is the meaning of a word?" We are left with looking about for a general something -- a something which fits all words from "lightning" to "lightning-bugs" and logical connectives. We are looking for a mysterious substratum capable of transubstantiations surely more complex than those of wine and bread.

So, much of Bouwsma's work on the question "What is the meaning of a word?" was done in order to reject it. It would be quite easy to suppose that Wittgenstein was raising the question in order to propose a new answer to it. Philosophers do read Wittgenstein as proposing a new theory of meaning as a replacement for the old, Platonic theory of meaning. But Bouwsma understood the radical new direction which Wittgenstein was giving to philosophical study in asking and following the lead of this question. Bouwsma knew that the question itself must be the object of study. One had to come to see what was wrong or "queer" about the question. Otherwise one might trot off to answer the question and produce another theory and make discoveries. Trot off, that is, without leaving one's study, i.e. Bouwsma's paradox. No, the "queerness" of the question had to be made apparent -- "made to ring." Listen to Bouwsma describe this process in his essay "The Blue Book":

The queerness of the question must be made to ring. And so the author must make it ring. There are presumably a number of ways. Sometimes it is sufficient or at least helpful to draw attention to the queerness. "Now listen to the question: What is the meaning of a word? Can't you hear that's queer?" And then if someone strains to hear he will hear it queer like a shadow passing over the question. There are other ways. If there are questions which have already struck one as queer and these questions are heard now side by side with the other question, the queerness of these questions may, as it were, be communicated to the other question, like vibrations. And if there are no familiar questions, which one may employ to bring out the queerness of the first one, then one may invent some questions in which the queerness is as loud as a bang. "What is the color of the number three?" . . . But one may also accentuate the queerness by the contrast with the unqueer. You ask: What is the meaning of a word? And do not know what to say. But when I ask you: What is the meaning of the word "ogre"? You tell me. So you do know what the meaning of a word is, namely, the word "ogre." So what is it you do not know? It should be obvious that what is done in such cases is to play with the similarities and differences among whatever forms of sense and sentences may serve the purpose. (*Philosophical Essays* 187)

As Bouwsma's attention was drawn to understanding the misunderstanding which the question concealed, he came to understand the corrective to it. If one was not to think of the meaning of a word as the thing named or signified by the word, how then was one to think of meaning? In *The Blue Book*, Wittgenstein began to speak of language-games -- of the actual uses of language in particular contexts. It was in language-games that one could see the meaning of a word -- could see the use of a word. In the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein put the idea succinctly: "#43. For a large class of cases -- though not for all -- in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (20). Repeatedly in his papers and notebooks Bouwsma enters the expression "meaning is use" as the topic for discussion and then works away at explaining it.

The expression, he writes in "Failure II: Meaning Is Use," is to be understood in opposition to the misunderstanding that the meaning of a word is the thing signified. If the question "What is the meaning of a word?" is to be rejected, it is rejected in favor of this idea that meaning is use. Meaning is use is not a new idea. It is perfectly obvious to anyone to whom the idea is explained, anyone, that is, except one under the spell of the question "What is meaning?" If one explained the idea to anyone not under this spell, he would see and understand the account immediately, but would probably not understand its point. It only has a point if one has been misled to think of meaning as a thing signified. Meaning is use is a description of how our language works for a person who has in a certain sense forgotten -- knows but has forgotten -- how it works. Just as it would be without a point to tell someone the price of a loaf of bread, it would be without a point to tell someone that words have uses and that their meanings are their uses. But if one in a grocery store is putting too much in his basket while forgetting the amount of money he has in his pocket, then the reminder of the price of the bread has been assembled for a purpose. So too with meaning. If there is a philosopher, in his study, looking to discover some new thing also known as the meaning of a word, then the reminder "meaning is use" has been assembled for a particular purpose.

Suppose that the meaning of a word were its referent -- the thing the word named. What would this be like? It would, one might suppose, be like this: When I say the word, I have the referent in mind. Of course, one would not mean by this that one had the log cabin in one's mind when one said or thought "izba," but rather that one had the memory image or the idea of the log cabin in one's mind. So now the idea has become attached to the word so that when the word is spoken and heard or written and seen, the idea, i.e. the meaning, flashes before the sender and receiver's minds. Meaning is communicated thus through the conduit language. One may see in this the completion of a picture which holds the referent theory of meaning together. But let us now continue to see what this theory would look like in action. A housewife scolds the garbage man for spilling garbage, lettuce and leaves in the driveway, Bouwsma teases (*Toward A New Sensibility* 99). And the garbage man asks "Lady what are you referring to?" She points and he picks up the garbage, smiling and saying "Lady I've got your referents." Referents spilled and back in a can. This is odd (99). Bouwsma might have played the case out in another way. He might have had the garbage man grasp the mental referents but not pick up the garbage from the driveway. This would be like Wittgenstein's case of "five red apples." One can have grasped the referents and not have grasped the meaning. The grocer is given a list by the boy with the words "five red apples" on it. Suppose instead of getting the apples for the boy, which would show that he

understood what was meant, suppose his eyes lit up and he said "Yes," and did nothing. He may have pictured the five apples to himself and grasped the referents in his mind. But his behavior shows that he does not understand the use of the words "five red apples" on a grocery list. He does not understand their meaning. Grasping their referent is not grasping their meaning. Bouwsma continues by means of this and other similar playful examples to show this difference between the referent of a word and the use of a word. How could we understand each other if we only have referents -- things in our heads -- with which to communicate?

Meaning is use is also connected as a corrective to the misleading analogies which Bouwsma develops -- that language is the dress of thought, that language is a window to thought, etc. These analogies, remember, all suggest the separation of language and thought. Language becomes dead and thought (meaning) becomes alive in these analogies. Language seems dead because one is looking at it as if it were noises or marks, and thought or meaning becomes alive because understanding happens in living minds by means of the mental referents of these dead signs. But meaning as use serves as a corrective to this. The signs are not dead. A word is not a noise. A word is used in a situation. The situation includes other words and people and their surroundings. The people may be using the words in countless different kinds of ways such as: giving orders and obeying them, describing the appearance of an object, speculating about an event, making up a story, singing, joking, dancing, and praying (*Philosophical Investigations* #23). A word takes on a life in these surroundings and may well have a different life in different surroundings. The life resides in the use of the word as opposed to residing in referents. It is, under this conception of meaning, the referent which is dead. If the housewife asks the garbage man to pick up the garbage, and he does, then I should say in awe, and yet without puzzlement, that these words and this situation are full of life. He understands what she means. He would not like garbage left in his driveway. He understands that the conception of this job well done does not include leaving garbage in someone's driveway. He does not want to be reported to his boss. He understands the difference between a request and a report. All this one can gather from the fact that he picked up the garbage when asked. The words have life. The referents do not. It does not matter whether he called the referents to mind when he picked up the lettuce and the coffee grounds. The referents might have been there or they might not. One could paint a picture of them and place them in a museum. Let them gather dust. Perhaps some traveler will pass through some day -- a philosopher perhaps who dreams he is traveling out of his study -- and will discover them. "What are these? The stuff of which universals are made? Or perhaps they are only copies of sense-data? Are they abstract general copies or only singular copies which might serve to represent others?"

2

The second common theme connected by Bouwsma's paradox is that of showing the difference between conceptual and factual investigations. The connection to the first theme is seen in Bouwsma's identification of the question "What is the meaning of a word?" as having the form of the Platonic question "What is X?" The latter calls for the common element in all cases where "X" is applicable. Just so, the question about meaning calls for the common element in meaning. What is the thing -- the kind of thing -- that gives meaning to a word? The Platonic question calls forth a conceptual investigation of "justice," as "What is time?" does for "time," and so on. But one may also notice about these

questions that they may be understood to be asking for the meaning of the word involved. "What is justice?" is asking for the meaning of the word "justice," and "What is time?" for the meaning of the word "time." Notice that the question is asked as if "justice" names one thing -- a thing with an essence. And it looks then as if our task in the conceptual investigation is to describe that thing's essence.

The model for conceptual investigation under this picture -- that the meaning of a word is the thing it represents -- is that of Socrates in the dialogues. Socrates introduces the idea of such an investigation along with the specific questions. The interlocutor replies by citing something from an ordinary experience. "What is justice?" "Justice is paying one's debts" or "Justice is giving each person his due." But these, Socrates objects, are only partial truths. They do not encompass the whole of justice. The counter cases aim at showing this. "What of a man who deposits a weapon with you in a healthy state of mind and returns in a rage demanding that you give back what he has deposited for safe keeping?" Would it be just to repay that debt -- to give that man his due?" Well, of course it would not or at least we should say that it is a perplexing case. Socrates tests what we would say by these descriptions, objections, and counter-examples. We would say that giving a person his due or repaying a debt is just. We would not say that helping an insane man harm another is just. Observing what we say is the refinement of the concept. And yet Socrates does not present his conceptual investigation as a matter of taking note of what we say. What we have to say is what we have to work with, but it is not the object of his conceptual investigation. That object is something hidden away behind the appearances of what we say. We peer through what we say to the essence of the thing. "You say this and that about justice, but what is it really? What is common to all of the things you say justice is?" In this manner Socrates looks for the referent -- the common element -- which the word names.

Now Socrates' investigation, we must remember, was conceptual and not factual. He was asking about a concept -- what defined that concept and how that concept was to be distinguished from other concepts. He proceeded by asking questions of other inquirers who sat or walked about with him. He did not, that is, travel with them to distant lands making observations and discoveries. Socrates stayed at home in his study, as it were. Plato makes a point of presenting him as one who did not travel for the very reason that he was not conducting factual investigations. (As I know think of it, Plato, in the *Phaedo*, represents Socrates as having described himself as not being interested in scientific investigations. Why am I in prison? It is not because I have bones and sinews thus constructed and that the doors of the jail are locked. I am in prison because I and the laws thought it best that I be here.) In any case, Socrates investigates concepts by peering through language. He may experience confusions in these matters -- one perhaps more deep than he could penetrate, i.e. this one concerning meaning -- but his confusions as well as his investigations were conceptual and not factual in nature.

As his paradox suggests, Bouwsma was attentive to this distinction between conceptual and factual investigations. The point in stressing that the philosopher stays at home is that if he were engaged in factual investigations, he could not do that at home. So it appears by the philosopher's claims that he has made factual investigations, but his staying at home belies the fact that he has been busy with conceptual investigations. It becomes important then for Bouwsma to stress the difference between factual and conceptual investigations. It also becomes important for him to be able to articulate what is confused about the kind of conceptual investigations that philosophers such as Plato have engaged in. "There is a real

entity which we call 'justice' which lives beyond our world of discourse and actions." This sounds like the discovery of a traveler. And we have seen some of what Bouwsma does by way of showing the confusion of Plato's conceptual investigation ("What is the meaning of a word?"). But one should notice that if there is confused conceptual investigation, there can be unconfused conceptual investigation or clarity in the investigation of concepts ("Meaning as use"). The distinction between conceptual and factual investigations, that is, still stands whether or not one becomes confused in conceptual investigation.

How did Bouwsma present this difference then between these two kinds of investigations? In 1968, he prepared a paper on the *Philosophical Investigations* in which he discusses the activity of philosophy. The longest part of that paper attends to the idea of conceptual investigations, as opposed to factual investigations, as the activity of philosophy. Bouwsma again takes up Wittgenstein's example from the *Philosophical Investigation* #89: "What is time?" But to get clear on the difference between this conceptual investigation and a factual one, he introduces the questions "What is water?" and "What is air?" for comparison. He notices the absence of conceptual perplexity over: What is water? We know how to decompose water into its elements. We can weigh it and measure the pressure it exerts on objects under the sea. We can devise formulas for its flow through pipes. And there are water wheels which have been built, turned by the force of falling water. Air too, in spite of its being invisible and insensible for the most part, is a subject for factual investigations. It seems more illusive, but one can be brought to see its measurable effects in sails, windmills, and the lift on airplane wings. We know something of the difficult struggles that scientists have had in coming to understand water and air and the like. But their difficulties notwithstanding, one does not feel the kind of conceptual perplexity about these questions that one does about time -- at least the scientist in doing his work does not. Wittgenstein quotes St. Augustine from the *Confessions*: "quid est ergo tempus? si nemo ex me quaerat scio; si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio." (What therefore is time? If no one asks me, I know; but if I wanted to explain it to someone who does ask me, I do not know.) And then he adds: "This could not be said about a question of natural science" (*Philosophical Investigations* #89).

The perplexity St. Augustine or anyone feels about time is felt fundamentally because it is a question arising out of our uses of the word "time." "Time flows like water." But where is it? What can it move? Water can turn a meter. Is a clock a time meter? ("The Mystery of Time," *Philosophical Essays* 99). "Time moves on" and "time flies" are expressions of change, measured by wrinkles and gray hair and other such signs of the passing of one's life. Here there is one picture of time moving. But there is another and different picture arising out of time's moving: Time can be thought of as a moving finger and "having writ, not all thy piety nor wit can remove one word of it." Past time is behind us and can never be returned to. Future time is not yet. And what a strange thing or strange place the present seems to be in this picture. What is present time? This is the kind of perplexity felt by St. Augustine when he says that the question itself bowls him over. And when he says "si nemo ex me quaerat scio," (If no one asks me, I know), he has unwittingly put his finger on language as the source of the perplexity. If no one asks him, he knows because he knows how to use the word. But if someone does ask, he forgets what he knows how to do, and looks for what is common to all the uses of "time." But the real time behind our multifarious uses of "time" is mysterious. Is time a something? And how are we to get a clear

picture of that thing from the different glimpses and pictures that we get from asking for a definition while looking at one of its uses? "nescio."

Bouwsma described the philosopher's task in his paper "The Blue Book" as having three phases: 1) To enable one to hear the queerness of a philosophical proposition more clearly; 2) To present the meanings of the words and expressions involved in philosophical propositions; 3) To uncover misleading analogies (*Philosophical Essays* 187). All three of these phases are of the kind of conceptual investigation that Bouwsma, following Wittgenstein's lead, thought a philosopher ought to be engaged in. His work on the questions "What is meaning?" and "What is time?" analyzing how they call for the discovery of the thing behind the word, and so on, are examples of the working out of these phases in conceptual investigation. To show how a word or expression is queer, is to show that the philosopher's use of them is a concept out of its natural place. Concepts fit in a network. Words have uses in a system of language. But the philosopher has stolen the word from its home and put it in an ill-suited foster home. Descartes: "Am I awake or asleep?" Where or when would one ordinarily ask such a question? Descartes has stolen this question from its home and taken it into his study where it has no context. There, in the study, no clues exist as to what work the question is doing or how one could possibly answer it. This is conceptual investigation.

So too with the second phase -- that of presenting the use and sense of a word or expression. How do we use the word "awake" and the expression "I am awake"? When we see this, we see what one does mean by these words in their ordinary use. This is the only source of meaning we have for these words. Are we deceived in dreams? How do we use the words "deceived" and "I dream"? Are dreams illusions? Do illusions not have backgrounds over against which the illusory object is an illusion? That is part of the grammar of the word "illusion." And dreams? Does the word "dream" have the same grammar as "illusion" or only a similar grammar? To understand how a word is used in its ordinary surroundings is also to begin to hear its queerness in its philosophical surroundings. These two phases of conceptual investigation are thus connected.

The third phase -- that of uncovering the hidden analogies -- is conceptual mining in the words and expressions underlying the philosophical propositions being investigated. "What is meaning?" and "What is time?" are like and yet not like "What is a triangle?" Plato noticed only the grammatical similarity between these questions. The question "What is a triangle?" has an answer. The mathematician can give us the most precise definition -- one which really does fit all the triangles one encounters in a geometry book. The common element is there in such cases. By analogy then, Socrates says that "What is virtue?" ought to have a common element as well. It is by means of this misleading analogy that a philosopher moves to search for the common element when none is there. The dissimilarities are relevant. "What is a triangle?" is specific in a way that "What is meaning?" is not. One has not asked: What is *a* meaning? Further, the word "triangle" is the property of mathematicians, at least when it comes to giving such definitions. Its use is controlled by mathematician overseers in a way that "time" and "meaning" are not. In uncovering this analogy as underlying the question "What is time?" the philosopher is helping to show how the conceptual confusion comes to be. It is by analogy to similar grammatical patterns that he does his work. This concept is like or unlike that concept.

The point I want is this. Bouwsma saw philosophy as it ought to be practiced as conceptual investigation. He also saw philosophy as it had been practiced as

conceptual investigation as well. But philosophy before Wittgenstein's work was mired in conceptual confusion. Wittgenstein addressed the reasons for that and Bouwsma achieved an understanding of those reasons and showed it, in many ways, in his papers and notebooks. "Bouwsma's paradox" was one expression of the idea that philosophers were mired in conceptual confusion because they did not understand the nature of philosophical investigations. They talked as if they were travelers making discoveries. They reported on their findings about the previously unknown existence of strange objects such as sense-data, universals, and acts of free will. But they made no travels, as people who make discoveries do. They were not making factual investigations, and their propositions only had some surface similarities to factual propositions. Rather, these philosophers stayed at home, in their studies, and studied words. Through words they made, or thought they made, their discoveries. Their investigations were word investigations. "How do these words work?" And Bouwsma, echoing Wittgenstein, proposed not that they leave their studies and find out what the world outside is really like, but that their word investigations be done with a new sensibility to the workings of our language.

3

The third common theme connected to the others by Bouwsma's paradox is Bouwsma's conscious avoidance of refutation in his philosophical method. Bouwsma does not present philosophical propositions, in any ordinary way, nor argue for or against them. As Bouwsma's work is negative towards the usual sorts of propositions that philosophers present, one would expect that his work is that of constructing refutations. But not only are there no refutations, there are numerous occasions on which he reflects on why he does not construct them. Two of the most notable occasions for reflection, are the published essays: "Notes on Berkeley's Idealism" and "The Race of Achilles and The Tortoise" (*Toward A New Sensibility* 171).

Bouwsma's paradox relates to this idea as follows. If philosophical propositions which seem to be discoveries about the world are not, if, that is, they are the results of conceptual and not factual investigations, and if those conceptual investigations are fraught with confusions, then those philosophical propositions are expressions of conceptual confusions. And now, what should one's relationship to the expression of conceptual confusion be? To refute such an expression of confusion will only be to enter into the confusion. If one asserts that the long is true, another does not correct this by denying that the long is true or by showing how it is false. The task becomes to show that the proposition is confused, if in fact it does not immediately appear so. The task is to show how it is "queer" and how, by contrast, what sense the language involved does actually make. And finally, the task is to show how one could come to be conceptually confused in such a way by uncovering the misleading analogies which lie underneath the philosophical proposition. These are the three phases of philosophical investigations which Bouwsma describes as belonging to Wittgenstein in "The Blue Book."

Bouwsma practices these phases, these techniques, everywhere. But in the essays on Berkeley and on Achilles particularly, he consciously reflects on the concept of refutation. What does it mean to refute Berkeley's idealism? And, what does it mean to refute Zeno who had implied that Achilles could not catch a tortoise, i.e. that motion was impossible? To understand what it would be to have a refutation of the expressions of such philosophical propositions would include understanding something of the nature of the confusions involved. In these essays, Bouwsma

raises the question of what it would be like to refute these propositions and teases out the confusions by means of this investigation into refutation.

"Notes on Berkeley's Idealism" begins with Samuel Johnson's famous refutation of Berkeley. On hearing a sermon on Berkeley's idealism, Johnson afterwards kicked a rock saying "I refute Berkeley thus" (171). Bouwsma wants to know how this constitutes a refutation. Did Berkeley say that Johnson could not kick a rock? Did he say that there were unkickable rocks? Or perhaps Berkeley thought that the rock was, as any object was, unkickable because it was in the mind and one could not get a foot inside the mind? Is Bouwsma dense here? Does he really not know what Johnson was doing or what Berkeley proposed? Bouwsma did have a cultivated density -- a density cultivated to show one how to fail to understand. These questions which he puts to Johnson's refutation force one to get clear on the kind of claim that Berkeley was making and on what it would take to refute that claim. If Berkeley had said that Johnson could not kick a rock or that there were unkickable rocks, these would be empirical claims which could be tested. Berkeley's claim then is seen to be unlike empirical claims. "All objects are composed of ideas" is not an empirical claim, so one can save the energy of attempting to put one's foot through a collection of ideas. But Bouwsma's teasing is not a defense of Berkeley either.

What is the claim that Berkeley is making if it is not an empirical claim -- not the result of a factual investigation? How was Berkeley thinking when he came to say that all objects were collections of ideas? Bouwsma writes: "One must see what leads Berkeley up to this point, and I don't mean that one must see what his words are, so that one could recite his argument. One must see where and what the confusions are ..." (180). He sets out then to show the confusions in a key passage from Berkeley which includes his main claims. Berkeley interchanges the words "ideas" and "sensations." Sensation language can include questions of location, i.e. sensations can be located, so the question "Where are they?" makes sense. And now Berkeley, caught up in this misleading analogy, talks as if sensations are like physical objects and can be located next to each other. He talks as if physical objects can be composed of sensations or ideas. Bouwsma reminds us that the parts of an apple are core, stem, meat, seed, and skin. The parts of an apple are not sensations. Another misleading analogy is exposed. Everyone knows that an apple is different from a sensation or an idea. But how did one learn this? Bouwsma reminds us that we did not learn this. One already understands this if he understands the uses of the words "apple," "sensation," and "idea." The uses of these words remind us that thoughts are in one's mind while apples are in trees. Berkeley has, by means of these and other misleading analogies, lost track of the use of "idea" and "apple." And also, by means of these analogies, comes to his great discovery. His discovery is that apples are ideas, and that houses, mountains, and rivers are ideas as well. And this discovery he made without leaving home.

Bouwsma takes up the trail of a number of misleading analogies in Berkeley. For example, he follows "sensations" as a special word that helps bring everything into the mind. On the one hand, the grammar of "sensation" is different from that of "seeing," "hearing," and "smelling." I see red and I see an apple. I hear a soft sound or a mouse. I do not see or hear sensations. I feel sensations. So the grammars of these words, if attended to closely, do not lead us to thinking of qualities or objects as sensations. On the other hand, qualities are sensible, and one may come to think of sensible qualities as sensations. And now, because sensations are felt and therefore seem more naturally to be a part of consciousness, the

sensations red, soft sound, etc. are thought to be a part of one's consciousness. So we go from qualities to sensations (sense ideas or sense-data) to sensations are in the mind and then to the conclusions that the qualities that compose objects are in the mind and consequently that objects are in the mind. There are, of course, additional trails which lead to this conclusion, several of which Bouwsma makes note of along this path. His task, however, was not to refute Berkeley, as Johnson and others have tried, but to show his philosophical propositions confused and to suggest how they came to be so.

These philosophical notes of Bouwsma's then were not refutations of idealism as for example were those which Moore had tried to accomplish in his essay of that title. Bouwsma, I would guess, was greatly influenced by that essay of Moore's in his earlier philosophical development. Moore, as I now think of it, had a similar refutation of idealism to Johnson's in his "Proof of an External World" -- holding up his hand as a refutation of a later generation's idealism. One might notice here also that in connection with Moore or anyone who is refuting idealism that a part of the concept of refutation is to establish a claim counter to idealism. One refutes idealism by claiming that the external (real or material) world exists. And so the parade of claim and counter claim in philosophy continues. That is what Wittgenstein and Bouwsma took aim at in their work. If we can characterize Moore's work as that of refuting idealism, then we might characterize Bouwsma's work, by contrast, as that of exposing and dismantling the confusions of idealism. Of his own task in this regard, Bouwsma jokes: "... what I propose to do is, I think, not to be described as refutation ... perhaps the word 'disfutation' will do" (181).

The essay "The Race of Achilles and The Tortoise" proceeds in such a manner. The attention again is directed to the illegitimacy of the use of refutation in philosophy. False factual claims should be refuted; conceptually confused claims should be shown to be confused. "Achilles cannot catch the tortoise," looks like a factual claim. But Zeno stayed at home too, never experimenting with tortoises and runners. Bouwsma asks why Achilles could not catch the tortoise. Was Achilles tired or sulking in his tent? Does he not like to race with tortoises? These are questions aimed at teasing the sense out of "Achilles cannot catch the tortoise." And what does the claim mean, if it does not allow for these questions? Bouwsma proposes some experiments. One involves placing markers at points where the tortoise was and from where Achilles moves to advance. When he advances, however, the tortoise has moved beyond his marker, and Achilles now has a new distance to make up. Achilles will always have a distance to make up. Is it like this? Will an experiment show that Achilles cannot catch the tortoise? It is not, as one knows, an experimental matter. If it were, Achilles would always catch the tortoise, and to hang on to the claim would make it irrefutable. What then? Nonsense.

Nonsense appears at every pretended turn which Bouwsma makes. "Achilles cannot catch the tortoise," cannot be given a clear expression. We do not know what the claim means. The ordinary uses of "X cannot catch Y" are exhausted and we do not know what is left to explain Zeno's claim. How can a claim be refuted if the claim is not a claim (is nonsense)? Zeno's claim was a claim in refutation of another claim -- a claim made by those who would have refuted Parmenides' claim. So we have three claims in a chain: The first is by Parmenides: "There is no motion"; the second is by refuters of Parmenides: "It is not true that there is no motion"; and the third is by Zeno the defender of Parmenides: "Motion is impossible." Bouwsma proposes an intervention in the cycle of claim and refutation: The refutation is nonsense and so also are the two claims which

preceded it. To see "Achilles cannot catch the tortoise" as nonsense puts an end to this seemingly intractable philosophical dispute.

These three themes prevalent in Bouwsma's writings are connected, I have suggested, by means of what Lazerowitz and Ambrose have called "Bouwsma's paradox." The themes might be characterized differently and the description of their connection might well have been seen in ways other than through the principle of Bouwsma's paradox. The latter is, for me however, a useful organizational principle as well as an insightful representation of the center of Wittgenstein's revolution in philosophy. I am indebted to Morris Lazerowitz and Alice Ambrose for calling attention to Bouwsma's paradox. Lazerowitz, in the same book, has remarked about Wittgenstein's revolution -- represented by Bouwsma's paradox -- that philosophers have ignored Wittgenstein.

One contemporary philosopher, Ludwig Wittgenstein, has made a number of observations which, if followed through, lead to a possible explanation of the perplexing failure to resolve philosophical disagreements. Although he is perhaps the most frequently discussed philosopher of this century, his insightful remarks have failed to attract any attention or to provoke the least interest. ("Reason and the Senses" 153)

Bouwsma too, in his later years, at times remarked that it is as if Wittgenstein never existed. Lazerowitz has speculated on the psychological reasons for the lack of effect which Wittgenstein has had. Bouwsma's paradox, and Bouwsma's writings in general, which are expressions of his understanding of Wittgenstein's revolution in philosophy have also been ignored by contemporary philosophers. This should come as no surprise, I suppose. One's common sense response to a philosophical proposition is to refute it or, on occasion, to support it. Although such propositions and the questions leading to them are nonsense, they are disguised as sense. It would not occur to one who has followed Berkeley's argument that Berkeley made no sense, even though that same one would probably be asking how Berkeley's view was false. If Empedocles refutes Parmenides, and Zeno refutes Empedocles, then the natural task of the next philosopher should be to refute Zeno. What treatment should one expect for one such as Wittgenstein or Bouwsma who take up the hard and subtle task of unmasking confusion rather than continuing the chain of refutations. As Bouwsma matured in his understanding of Wittgenstein and in his application of that understanding to other philosopher's work, he became more "philosophical" about the impact, or lack of impact, which he or Wittgenstein would have on the progress of philosophy. At first, perhaps, Bouwsma, caught up in the excitement of Wittgenstein's having found a new method for the treatment of philosophical problems, believed that philosophy would take a new direction. But with time he would come to appreciate how much philosophical problems really were perennial and that philosophers were not to be readily rid of the confusions which they had come to love. Philosophy, Bouwsma came to see, was a continual struggle against one's own intelligence, and Wittgenstein had provided the weapons for that struggle. In a striking note to a seminar on the *Philosophical Investigations* at Texas, Bouwsma wrote:

The book, *P.I.*, may be described as a skirmishing in a continuing warfare against the fascination which the forms of language exert upon us. The warfare is not orderly and there are no decision battles as though there were

a time when the war was over. Like most of life's problems, this struggle lasts a life time and continues from generation to generation. In struggling W. has shown us how to fight. At no point does W. say: "Now I have won." In this warfare the dead rise again to fight. What W. does is to describe for us what our warfare is, war aims, and how the fight is to be carried on. Then he goes on to fight. He might have said: "Watch me." And that is certainly something that we who read W. may do. We learn from him how to fight. (Notebooks mid-1970s)

Bouwsma did not believe that Wittgenstein had settled anything in philosophy nor that his, Bouwsma's, teaching or writing would put an end to the warfare. What unpretentious determination Bouwsma had in the midst of that warfare! What remarkable patience he had in carefully exposing the nonsense and the hidden analogies and in carefully talking and writing sense in his unhurried style!

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3

Bouwsma's Twin Arts

O.K. Bouwsma wrote relatively few papers about Wittgenstein. There is his well known paper "The Blue Book" and another which he wrote for a symposium on Gilbert Ryle called "On a Difference Between Ryle and Wittgenstein." But for the most part his papers, which were written to be read aloud to some philosophical assembly, were not about Wittgenstein but about some other philosopher or some philosophical problem. His papers were not commentaries on Wittgenstein, but rather displays of his understanding of Wittgenstein. Accordingly, one would not learn from reading these papers some new insight into Wittgenstein's philosophy, but rather one might find there a model for how Wittgenstein's insights into philosophy and language might be applied. From Wittgenstein, Bouwsma learned certain skills or "arts" as he called them. He applied those arts to Descartes and others and to the problems of his students.

If one reads Bouwsma's collected papers, he should, then, expect to find there something different from Wittgenstein. That something is a display -- I would not call it an advance, nor is it original -- of how Wittgenstein's ideas could be put to work. Of "understanding," Wittgenstein wrote that one understands when one knows how to go on. Bouwsma, having understood Wittgenstein, knew how to go on. He knew how to separate sense from nonsense and how to display each. Wittgenstein reflects on his own work that its aim is to teach one to pass from a piece of disguised nonsense to something that is patent nonsense. Bouwsma had learned to do this. He had learned how to recognize nonsense, disguised and hidden in such often read paragraphs as Descartes' *Meditations*, and to display that nonsense as obvious sense. And this now, I will emphasize, is the difference between reading Wittgenstein and reading Bouwsma: In Bouwsma's papers one can see actual pieces of disguised nonsense teased out and on display as obvious nonsense.

Bouwsma developed a variety of arts in learning to philosophize in this manner. He developed, for example, the art of attacking questions and the art of providing the right analogy, and others. He lists and explains these and others in his essay "The Blue Book." But there is one feature of his philosophizing that stands out as distinctive when one reads his papers, particularly his papers on Descartes. Understanding that feature is essential for understanding what Bouwsma is doing. Although it involves a collection of arts which he acquired by reading Wittgenstein, I should like to refer to it as "Bouwsma's twin arts." In what follows, I would like to explain the general structure of the twin arts of showing the sense and nonsense of a philosophical sentence or expression. I will then illustrate his use of these twin arts in several of his papers on Descartes. My remarks and examples will be confined to the six published papers on Descartes, though he applied these techniques quite generally.

Here then is a general description of the twin arts that Bouwsma practiced. They are twins because there are two arts practiced separately on the same sentence. Still, their application proceeds in different ways. The sentence (or expression) will be some essential sentence, selected from a philosopher, in this case Descartes, which the reader may have frequently overlooked in following an argument to its conclusion. This sentence will have philosophical surroundings, which is to say that it is a part of Descartes' philosophical system. Yet the same sentence normally has

other surroundings, and not just one other but numerous other surroundings. In these other surroundings, it will make sense -- it will have a meaning which can be explained. Bouwsma, beginning here, removes the sentence from its philosophical surroundings and places it back into its normal surroundings. Replacing it there, he reminds us of how it works, and, if necessary, he explains its meaning or comments on some features of its use. This is the first of the twin arts. It is the implementation of Wittgenstein's idea that the meaning of a sentence is its use in a language-game. The practice of the art amounts to displaying the sense of the sentence.

When the sense has been displayed, Bouwsma reckons on a disappointment in the reader. The sense displayed will not be what the reader wanted, nor what Descartes intended. The disappointment is a function of a comparison to what Descartes was trying to do with the sentence in its philosophical surroundings. The sentence functioned there to create some sceptical problem, perhaps a doubt about the senses, or to lay the cornerstone of certainty. And then, to be reminded of a normal setting and a perfectly ordinary meaning is to be disappointed. "This meaning was not what Descartes had in mind!" The disappointment is like that felt by someone who borrowed a neighbor's tool only to discover later that it was not the right tool for the job. There will be different reactions on the part of Bouwsma's readers at this point. Some will say that Bouwsma has not told them anything. The assumption here, perhaps hidden, is that there is no essential difference between the normal surroundings of the sentence and the surroundings of Descartes' philosophical system. The intended response however, is for the reader to make the comparison and accept the disappointment. It is hoped, that is, that the reader will recognize that the sentence will not work as Descartes intended. This will be like the realization: "It's the wrong tool!" It is a disappointment, but it is also a moment of perspicuity. Bouwsma sometimes called his method "the method of failure," because he had tried but failed to understand some philosopher. Following my description here, one might also call it "the method of disappointment."

The first of the twins then is displaying the sense. It leads to disappointment. The second of the twins is already contained in the method of disappointment. As the sense of the sentence is made clear, the nonsense of the sentence begins to emerge as one returns, in disappointment, to Descartes' use in its philosophical surroundings. The uses and features which one has grasped by placing the sentence in its normal surroundings make clear that the sentence does not work, is not yet clear, or makes no sense in its philosophical surroundings. Perhaps there is a clash of concepts, perhaps it asks a question that could not have a clear answer, or perhaps it claims something that could only be claimed in its normal surroundings. In any of these and similar cases, it will be clear that there is something wrong with the use -- there is no sense yet where it first appeared that there was. The disguised nonsense becomes patent. The method of failure has a kind of success involved in it, as Bouwsma uncovers the disguise ("the art of the detective"). The second of the twin arts then, is the mirror twin of the first: it is the art of displaying the nonsense of a philosophical sentence.

I would like now to illustrate what I have been calling "the twin arts," by means of several examples from Bouwsma's papers on Descartes. There are many examples, at least one for each of his six papers, but I will develop only two. The first is from "Descartes' Scepticism of the Senses," and the sentence which receives the treatment is: "Am I awake or asleep?" (*Philosophical Essays* 51). This is not a quotation from Descartes, but an expression of the sceptical problem which Descartes has cultivated in the "First Meditation." Descartes knows no way of

distinguishing waking life from sleeping, which is to say from dreams. Consequently, what I see, presuming myself to be awake, may, as in a dream, disappear upon waking. Hence the question: "Am I awake or asleep?" and Descartes' confusion.

Consider now Bouwsma's application of his twin arts to the analysis of this sentence. He begins by asking if "Am I awake or asleep?" is like "Is he awake?" We know how to answer or to find out the answer to the latter question. Using "Is he awake?" as a model might perhaps help Descartes or someone who is confused by "Am I awake or asleep?" On the basis of the model, Descartes might go on to ask: "Are my eyes open? Am I snoring?" But he would not be satisfied with this approach. He would, most likely, go on to question the answers that he gave to these questions. He might say, "My eyes only seem to be open. I only seem to be snoring." At first glance then, Bouwsma has not helped Descartes with this suggestion. But notice how the suggestion provides a model of sense for the sentence under study. As Descartes' question stumps one, Bouwsma's question immediately makes it clear which way to go: "Is he awake? I can't tell from here. I will have to get closer. Are his eyes open? Yes. He's awake!" As we have a model provided for understanding the question of whether one is awake, we obtain, by comparison to that model, a glimpse of the oddness of that sentence. The twin arts are being practiced in this.

If "Am I awake or asleep?" is odd by contrast to "Is he awake?" and if we cannot make sense of it by means of "Are my eyes open?" etc., then is there any other way of making sense of it? Bouwsma recommends that we look for some normal surroundings in which to dip the sentence. Might we not ask it in surroundings where we are astonished or when just awakening or confused? In the first surroundings, it is an exclamation -- a rhetorical question. It calls for no answer. In the second instance, one must look about and get one's bearings: the pillow, the bedroom walls, etc. Here it becomes clear what has happened and what the answer is. "I have been asleep. It was a dream." In these surroundings the sentence takes on its familiar look and taste. One knows what to do with it, and there is no puzzle.

It is at this point that the disappointment develops. For as we gain that feeling of familiarity, we simultaneously realize its queerness in the surroundings Descartes has provided. In the familiar surroundings in which it is a genuine question, the question has a meaning and an answer. But Descartes has no interest in this question and this answer. He already knows what to do with it in this specific context. What he wants to know rather, is whether he is awake in any and all contexts. But if this is his question, the concepts of being awake and of being asleep no longer make sense. Determining whether one is awake or when one has been asleep are very specific activities. Descartes wants to remove these activities from consideration as irrelevant and yet continue to ask the question. If one still feels disappointment at not getting the answer Descartes wanted, he might do well to ask himself the extent to which he enjoys this activity of denying himself access to possible answers his question has. Is there pleasure in this puzzlement? An appropriate psychological response to this disappointment might be acceptance, perhaps even, as in Wittgenstein's case, relief. The fly now knows how to go in and out of the fly-bottle. Going in and out of the fly-bottle is facilitated by the practice of the twin arts.

My second illustration of the practice of these twin arts is taken from the paper "Failure I: Are Dreams Illusions?" The sentence providing the puzzle is, "Dreams

are illusions" (*Toward a New Sensibility* 61). Again this is a kind of summary sentence taken from Descartes' dream argument in the "First Meditation." There Descartes reminds himself that while asleep he has been misled by "illusions" similar to those lunatics have. In dreams he has seen such things as hands and dressing gowns and fires which in fact are not there. So dreams are illusions, and for all Descartes know, so too are his hands, etc.

In practicing the twin arts on "Dreams are illusions," Bouwsma is unable to find the normal surroundings for the whole sentence. "Dreams are illusions" has no use. That is instructive in itself. But he is able to find some of the regular hangouts of the word "illusion." He examines them and observes that with illusions one says such things as "I thought I saw ... This is not the past tense of I think I see ..." The latter would not be used in connection with an illusion. Illusions are discovered in retrospect. I take one thing for something else and later discover the mistake. And so, "I thought I saw ..." reflects the retrospective aspect of illusions.

There is something similar to this feature in dreams. "I dreamed ..." is like "I thought I saw ..." in that it is said after the dream. But this is only a surface similarity. Illusions are accompanied by this further expression: "And what was it you did see?" "I thought I saw a dead dog." "And what was it?" "It was only an old coat lying in the street." With dreams and the expression, "I dreamed ..." there is no such follow up. "I dreamed I had a dog." "And what was it you did dream?" Nonsense. One cannot speak of dreams in the same way that one can speak of illusions. This dissimilar feature of the way one speaks of illusions and dreams is only one of a number of differences. Illusions, for example, have backgrounds. If one thought he saw a dead dog, he saw it somewhere -- in the street or on the steps. But he does not say of the street or the steps (of the background) that he only thought he saw that too. Dreams, however, are unlike this. Dreams are not set in some background as an illusory object. Bouwsma borrows and reverses a line of poetry from Marianne Moore for comparison: Illusions are like "real gardens with imaginary toads," while dreams are like imaginary gardens with imaginary toads.

Now how is all of this to be understood as the practice of the twin arts? -- of displaying the sense and displaying the nonsense? The sense is displayed when "illusion" is placed in its normal surroundings and studied. "I thought I saw ..." and "And what was it you did see?" are observations of what it makes sense to say of illusions. Similarly, the remarks about dreams and those about illusions having backgrounds while dreams do not, are all a part of displaying the sense. The nonsense is displayed when they are put back together in the same sentence: "Dreams are illusions." If we are reminded of the sense these words make separately, we see what Bouwsma calls "the clash of concepts" when they are equated in the sentence. If dreams were illusions, we could say the same thing of dreams that we could of illusions. "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." But beggars do not ride, as wishes and horses are different kinds of things. Seeing this is seeing the manner in which the nonsense of "Dreams are illusions" is displayed. It is, seeing the twin arts practiced.

There are in Bouwsma's other essays on Descartes similar illustrations of the twin arts. He applies them to the sentence: "On many occasions I have in sleep been deceived" in the paper with the same title. And in two papers, "Remarks on the *Cogito*" and "I Think I Am," he applies the arts to the expression "I think." And, of course, he applies them to the sentences of other philosophers, such as

Berkeley and Moore, making use of other arts of Wittgenstein as well in the process. But I will bring my description of Bouwsma's twin arts to an end here. My aim has been to characterize and focus attention on this central feature of Bouwsma's work and to put it into perspective with respect to his understanding of Wittgenstein.

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Bouwsma and Moore: The Use of Analogy in Method

In this paper I would like to show something about Bouwsma's use of analogy in his philosophical method by way of examining two of his papers on G.E. Moore: "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data" and "Some Reflections on Moore's Recent Book."

I have not seen anything in Bouwsma's notebooks nor in these two papers in which Bouwsma explained why he originally turned to Moore's work with such hope and interest as he had. Subsequently, he sent several of his best students to work with Moore in Cambridge -- thus making his connections to Wittgenstein, he became friends with Moore, he wrote of problems in understanding Moore, and he wrote of Moore with great respect even in the later years in the midst of attempting to dismantle Moore's philosophy -- "May my betters rob me of my 'darling follies,' among which betters I have long counted first Professor Moore." (Bouwsma, *Philosophical Essays*, "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data" 20) About this initial hope and interest in Moore I can only speculate. It must have been related to Bouwsma's youthful "philosophical idealism" and Moore's refutations of that idealism. Moore had challenged the murky abstractions and skeptical claims of idealism with clarity and common sense. This might have seemed an impressive display of philosophy's ability to make progress to Bouwsma. Whether or not this is true, he did see in Moore a desire for clarity and for the humbling of grand and skeptical abstractions.

In 1959, Bouwsma wrote a letter to a common acquaintance of Moore's, and later reflected on the letter in his notebook: "I wrote a letter to Gilpatric (Rockefeller) touching on what Moore had done. What is generally conceded is that Moore put an end to a long period of English philosophizing. I made some remarks concerning how he did this, namely by asking: What do you mean? I also described Moore as abrasive. . . . How did he do it?" (Notebooks: May 29, 1959). In the note, Bouwsma goes on to say that Moore was independent of Wittgenstein and so did not have his insights into language to help him through his problems. Moore still thought of meanings as the referents to words. But, Bouwsma notes, Moore insisted on attending to detail and resisted the "big strokes" and "broad sweeps." He would fasten on certain words crucial to the argument and ask: "What does this word mean?" In this manner Moore brought the idealist down from lofty heights. The idealist would claim that the universe is spiritual, and Moore would ask if tables and chairs were then spiritual too. Moore did not know how to understand his fellow philosophers -- not as Wittgenstein failed to understand -- but Moore took their work as his subject matter and found it confused, loose, and impenetrable. He did not see that he suffered from some of the same misunderstandings of language as those he failed to understand, but he found his own way of not understanding. In this he was self-reliant, trusting in his own intelligence. "He saw wrongly," Bouwsma says, "but with his own eyes." This testimonial to Moore, while not explaining Bouwsma's original interest in him, does show his later interest in and respect for him. It shows too that Bouwsma saw what Moore did not have but needed for his philosophical task.

In Norman Malcolm's essays on Moore -- "George Edward Moore" and "Moore and Ordinary Language," he portrays Moore as a kind of John the Baptist to Wittgenstein. Moore understood that philosophy had de-railed somehow,

making claims that were obviously counter-intuitive. Moore elevated "common sense" to the level of a justified basis for countering these counter-intuitive claims and, thereby, attempted to get philosophy back on track. But while there was great insight in this understanding, it was incomplete. Moore had the wrong tool for the task of re-railing philosophy. It was not common sense but ordinary language that was needed to bring philosophy back from its derailment. Common sense counters idealistic skepticism by speaking of realities such as physical objects, sense-data, and universals. But these realities are every bit the result of the conception of "meaning as referent" as are the conscious entities of the idealist. Wittgenstein's recommendation to think of meaning as use or to think of ordinary language usage as the presentation of the meaning of philosophical language is lost on Moore. Moore still engages in argumentation and refutations. He does not make Wittgenstein's shift from refuting the unruly claims of philosophers to the showing of the nonsense of those claims by means of comparing them to the ordinary usage of words and expressions.

Bouwsma, as a mature thinker, understood this about Moore. Once, in a seminar, he described Moore as a kind of Moses who saw the promised land, having led others to it, but could not go in himself. He could not go in himself because his keys did not fit the lock of the door through the passage. Moore had come there by means of using common sense as the basis for the refutation of idealism. But there was "no common sense solution to a philosophical problem" -- there was no means of crossing into the new land for him. There now are two grand images for Moore -- John the Baptist and Moses. Perhaps they are overdone, but they suggest something of Bouwsma's attitude towards Moore. They suggest why he turned to Moore initially -- sharing a rejection of idealism -- and why he sustained an interest in Moore later -- appropriating Wittgenstein's understanding of Moore's shortcomings.

Bouwsma published only two papers on Moore: "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data" and "Reflections on Moore's Recent Book." The former was published in the Schilpp volume *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore* which contains Moore's lengthy reply as well. The latter was published in *The Philosophical Review*. Both appear in Bouwsma's *Philosophical Essays*. There are a sprinkling of notebook entries on Moore, and a set of typescript notes corresponding to a seminar he taught on Moore in 1966. To my knowledge he did not often teach him. Given Bouwsma's interest in Moore, it is somewhat surprising that he did not write and teach more about him. It is only somewhat surprising in that Bouwsma's advance to Wittgenstein from Moore diminished his interest in him as a source of a fruitful methodology and made his writing style, which aimed at refutation and the exclusion of all possible misreadings, seem tedious to Bouwsma.

While these two papers shed light on Moore, they are not immediately useful as explanations of what Moore said. They do not endorse Moore's views, nor speak of the hope which Bouwsma must have had for Moore's work. They are in fact critical of Moore, though not each in the same way. My interest in them does not lie in what they show about Moore, but in what they show about Bouwsma. Through these papers on Moore one may see a development in Bouwsma's understanding of the method of philosophizing which he had acquired from reading Wittgenstein. My aim in this paper then is to show one aspect of that method -- namely his use of analogy -- as Bouwsma came to use it in connection with Moore. As it turns out, these two essays show a progression, I believe, of Bouwsma's skill

in using analogy in his method, and I will try to point out what that progression is as well.

In order to show what Bouwsma was doing with analogy in these two papers, I will first give an account of Bouwsma's understanding of the roll of analogy in his conception of a philosophical method. This will involve referring to what Bouwsma acquired from Wittgenstein. Secondly, I will present a summary of the contents of each paper. This will amount to a presentation of the analogies which Bouwsma assembled for the particular purpose of showing how Moore came to hold his views and how those views were confused. I will look at some of the details of these while commenting on how they illustrate his understanding of the use of analogy.

1

I should now like to explain and elaborate on Bouwsma's understanding of the roll of analogy in his conception of philosophy. From the late 1930s until 1953, Bouwsma, as he describes it, "fed" upon a copy of Wittgenstein's dictated notes known now as *The Blue Book*. This feeding time led to the development of his conception of philosophy. Both papers on Moore were written roughly within this time frame as well as his paper called "The Blue Book." The latter paper is central to understanding Bouwsma's conception of the new task of philosophy. The new task of philosophy required a new sensibility in the matter of language. If one was to discover, as Bouwsma thought was necessary, how philosophy had de-railed and could be re-railed, one needed to develop this new sensibility. It is not a new understanding or a new theory of language which is required, for Wittgenstein believed that he was not so much saying something new as reminding philosophers how the language of their theories was being used in extra ordinary ways. Bouwsma captured his hard won conception of the task of philosophy in his essay "The Blue Book." It is at one and the same time an insightful representation of what Wittgenstein was doing in *The Blue Book* and an expression of Bouwsma's matured conception of philosophy. The essay summarizes the new sensibility toward language under three headings, as the reader will recall. The first two are what I have called earlier Bouwsma's "twin arts." They are to present the sense and the nonsense of the philosophical language involved. One must develop or quicken a sensibility for the queerness of metaphysical language and a sensibility for the ordinary uses of the same language. But the third task in developing the new sensibility towards language is to search out the hidden analogies in our ordinary language which mislead one into formulating the metaphysical propositions. And that is what Bouwsma was busy with in his two papers on Moore.

In *The Blue Book*, Wittgenstein discusses how a philosopher wishes for a "new notation" which will capture more strongly some difference which he sees in ordinary language (59). This new notation will become the metaphysical proposition. Then Wittgenstein continues: "We therefore have to look around for the source of his puzzlement [the metaphysical proposition] (59). "Uncovering the misleading analogy" is how Bouwsma describes this aspect of the task of philosophy in his essay on *The Blue Book*. And it is this aspect which he tries to implement in his papers on Moore. These remarks of Wittgenstein follow and are a part of Wittgenstein's references to Moore's philosophy. They follow the well known remark: "There is no common sense answer to a philosophical problem" (58). And so, I believe, in looking for sources of puzzlement in Moore, Bouwsma is thoroughly caught up in the progression of Wittgenstein's ideas in *The Blue Book*. But his choice of Moore as the philosopher to illustrate this is not because

Wittgenstein recommended it, but because Moore was already the philosopher who had captured Bouwsma's attention, imagination, and respect. Perhaps Moore had the same impact on Wittgenstein too or at least provided him with some of the same kinds of reasons for doing philosophy that he did for Bouwsma. In any case, Bouwsma pursued his natural interest in Moore in these papers.

Bouwsma's papers on Moore are full of analogies which he, Bouwsma, generated. Not all of them serve the same purpose, but most do. That purpose and certainly the overall aim of the papers, is to show how Moore, by means of following misleading analogies, came to believe in the presence of sense-data and other such philosophical entities. There has been, of course, the comparison of this task to psycho-analysis. If one comes to see the steps by which one came to have a spell cast over one, then the spell will have been broken. Or is it that if one comes to see the path by which one came to be lost, one will know the way out? There are perhaps a variety of ways of describing the point and explicating the misleading analogy. Whatever the way chosen to explain it, it should be seen as the completion of the task of analysis under the Wittgenstein-Bouwsma conception of philosophical analysis. Exposing the source of philosophical confusion completes or finishes the task of displaying the confusion. In a self-reflective notebook entry from the 1950s, Bouwsma describes what he does in philosophy in terms of the analogy:

What can I do now? I can read Plato, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume -- in a certain way. I learned this from W. Perhaps I should not say that W taught me. Here I should introduce specimens of such readings. Can I also describe what in such cases I will have done? I think that what in all cases I do is to look for the analogy or analogies that are involved and then to elaborate the analogy. The elaboration of the analogy will serve to make what has been said ridiculous. Then I try to show what in the grammar of the expression involved leads to the analogy in the first place. The grammatical analogy leads to further analogy. In order to show what has been done here -- the passage from grammatical analogy to further analogy -- I also go on to make that passage clear by developing it further. (Notebooks: Oct. 15, 1959)

This self-reflective note does not in itself explain Bouwsma's acquired conception of philosophy, but it does show how that acquired conception can be focused in the use of analogy. The passage also presents the exact pattern of his work in the two papers on Moore.

Plato, Descartes, and Moore are read not because Bouwsma hoped to find in them the correct description of the universe, but because Bouwsma now had a way of coming to see how their explorations of the universe led them to their discoveries. He could retrace their journey's with them, without anyone's leaving one's study, showing by means of the grammatical analogy how each came to make and believe his own discoveries. Should they then abandon their search and beliefs? Well, the value of exposing the misleading analogy is that one comes to see the path by which one mistakenly came to believe that there was an entity for which to search. The aim is not to produce a set of metaphysical propositions which deny the claims of the first set, as if "There are sense-data" should now be replaced by "There are no sense-data." The aim of exposing the misleading analogies is not more metaphysics but conceptual clarity.

2

In this section I want to present accounts of the contents of Bouwsma's two papers on Moore. Presenting the contents in both cases involves presenting and explaining the analogies Bouwsma uses. Both papers can be read as a succession of analogies. I will begin with Bouwsma's first paper on Moore: "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data." I will be citing and quoting the paper as it appeared in Bouwsma's *Philosophical Essays* published in 1965. It is important for my purposes to remember that this paper was first published in 1942 as a part of the Schilpp volume on G.E. Moore in "The Library of Living Philosophers Series." Moore had just retired from Cambridge and had come to the United States in 1940 at the invitation of Bouwsma's friends Morris and Alice Lazerowitz. Schilpp was able to collect the papers while Moore was in the United States. It is interesting that many of the contributors of the papers are friends and students of Bouwsma. Moore's paper, "A Defence of Common Sense," on which Bouwsma's was a commentary, was first published in 1924. These dates are significant because, I want to suggest, Bouwsma's use of analogy in his philosophical method matured between the first paper, which was written shortly before 1942 and the second paper which was not written until 1953.

The first paper then, "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data," begins with Bouwsma presenting a quotation from Moore's "A Defence of Common Sense," for discussion. The quotation is Moore's response to his observation that some philosopher's have doubted that there are such things as sense-data. The quote includes the following two sentences:

And in order to point out to the reader what sorts of things I mean by sense-data, I need only ask him to look at his own right hand. If he does this he will be able to pick out something (and unless he is seeing double, only one thing) with regard to which he will see that it is, at first sight, a natural view to take, that that thing is identical, not indeed, with his whole right hand, but with that part of its surface which he is actually seeing, but will also (on a little reflection) be able to see that it is doubtful whether it can be identical with a part of the surface of his hand in question. (quoted in *Philosophical Essays* 1.)

Part 1 of Bouwsma's paper discusses the difficulties presented in Moore's directions for how to "pick out" sense-data. Bouwsma proceeds by means of a series of invented analogies to show the difficulties involved in picking out sense-data. Is it, for example, like looking at your hand and picking out your knuckles? That would give us a clear set of instructions as we would know the difference between the knuckles and the rest of the hand. If finding the sense-data when looking at one's hand were like this, then one could follow the directions. The directions would be clear, i.e. would make sense. But Moore's directions could not be understood according to this analogy, for in Moore's directions we must pick out something about which it is doubtful whether it is identical with the very thing from which we are to pick it out (namely, part of the surface of the hand). Here the analogy is used to show that something -- the directions -- has not yet made sense.

A second analogy functions in a way similar to the first. Bouwsma compares Moore's directions to picking a red marble out of a basket which also contains a red pepper and a red rubber ball. Perhaps there would be no problem in this. But one

might imagine that the marble and the ball could be confused for each other, and then, attempting to pick out the marble, one picked out the rubber ball. Here Bouwsma is trying to capture the part of the directions which spell out how one is to feel doubtful over something that is identical, or nearly identical, with something else. But this analogy fails also because there are criteria for distinguishing red marbles from red rubber balls but none for distinguishing part of the surface of a hand from the sense-datum of a hand.

Moore has set the criteria for identifying sense-data as that part of the surface of a hand which is distinguishable yet indistinguishable from part of the surface of a hand. Once one picks out the sense-data of X, a doubt arises about whether it is indistinguishable from the surface of X, but that doubt is never resolvable. Bouwsma wants to focus on this. He produces another analogy which brings one along in picking out sense-data to the point where it is clear that they cannot be picked out. The analogy is that of rubber gloves on a cook's hands. Visitors to the kitchen at first take the cook to have on rubber gloves which are not a part of the surface of his hands and yet on closer inspection a doubt arises as to whether there are gloves which are not a part of the surface of his hands. The visitors fall to arguing about whether he has gloves on or not. Bouwsma constructs the language of this story to parallel that of Moore's. The analogy shows what it would be like for there to be a dispute over whether something meeting Moore's description of sense-data exists or not. But in the process it also shows that there is something flawed in the conception of sense-data that is not flawed in that of rubber gloves. With gloves, one may take them off or pull them away from the skin or hold the hands in a different light. But with sense-data there is no such thing as getting a better look and no such thing as settling the dispute. Moore, in fact, defines them by the criterion that there is no way of settling the doubt over whether they are part of surfaces of objects. They are distinguishable yet indistinguishable from surfaces of objects. Now Bouwsma's analogy aims at showing the difficulty in understanding the directions to pick out sense-data, but that difficulty is an apparent contradiction or inconceivability. And this latter fact seems to make Bouwsma's work look like an argument against the existence of sense-data. That in any case is how Moore understood him ("A Reply To My Critics," *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore* 647).

Another disruptive analogy: Sense-data and surfaces are like twins being one person. This must be understood facetiously or as a joke. Each identical body is regarded as fitting perfectly inside the other so that they appear as one person. "He is Hans and Fritz." And which one am I seeing now? If one answers, a doubt arises about that answer, and, of course, there would be no way of settling the doubt. Bouwsma allows the reader to draw the conclusion from this analogy. Sense-data and surfaces are twins. A difference which makes no difference is no difference. Sense-data are completely indistinguishable from surfaces. The concept of sense-data makes no sense. Or is it that sense-data do not exist? Is the latter conclusion also to be drawn? Bouwsma never draws it explicitly. Again, Moore takes him to be drawing that conclusion. In some ways Bouwsma's discussion of sense-data reminds one of Berkeley's discussion of material objects. Sometimes one takes Berkeley's arguments as showing that material objects make no sense, and at other times one takes them to be showing that there are no such things as material objects. The latter makes Berkeley an idealist. But Bouwsma is learning how to resist making metaphysical claims. He does not want to make claims that deny the existence of sense-data nor affirm realism.

Using Moore's language for picking out sense-data again, Bouwsma now substitutes "mirror-images" where he had previously substituted rubber gloves for sense-data. This analogy seems to get us closer to the stuff of which sense-data are made. The mirror-image of one's hand is at first taken to be identical with part of the surface of one's hand, but then a doubt arises, etc. Little children and puppies might be taken in, but grown-ups, knowing how to recognize hand mirror-images, are not. This analogy plays out differently than that of the twins, for here there is a difference and at least grown-ups know it. As in the case of the rubber gloves, one knows how to separate what looks identical. But Bouwsma is concerned in this analogy to raise a question about the doubt which is supposed to arise. With seeing a hand, one is to see it and then have doubts about whether it is the sense-data of a hand that one is seeing. But how could that doubt come to be unless one was already familiar with the theory of sense-data? What is there about seeing a hand that would give one the doubts about whether it was really a hand that one was seeing or the sense-data of the hand? How does sense-data come into this? The analogy to mirror-images raises this puzzle for Bouwsma. If one sees a mirror-image of a hand and observes (ala Moore) that it is identical with part of the surface of his hand and then doubts whether it is a part of the surface of his hand, then he has already understood that there are mirror-images in order for the doubt to arise. No concept of mirror-image, no doubt possible -- for one needs something to mistake the surface for. So too then, Bouwsma notices: No concept of sense-data, no doubt possible -- for one needs something to mistake the surface for. The point, I take it, is that according to Moore's instructions for picking out sense-data, the doubt about the surface is essential for identifying the sense-data, but that doubt can not arise until after one is already able to identify sense-data. The explanation of the concept begs itself. This concept, like some of the others, while a difficulty in understanding what Moore meant, has some features of a more straight-forward philosophical argument. Such features are not typical of Bouwsma's later work.

The next analogy is to the language of mistaking one thing for another. The case provided is that of Jacob's tricking Isaac into giving him the blessing rather than his brother Esau. Jacob had attached wool to his hand to match Esau's hairy features, and Isaac was blind or nearly so. Isaac, noticing a difference in the voice of Esau, might have asked: "Is this the hand of Esau or Jacob?" Now Bouwsma develops some of the language of this situation -- it is the language of doubt in making a mistake of one thing for another. And what is present to the language of doubt in making a mistake is that there are respects in which two things are similar and respects in which they are different. Isaac notices that while Esau's arm is similar to the arm he is feeling, Esau's voice is different from the voice he is hearing. There may be other similarities and differences as well. If there were no similarities, there would be no mistake, but if there were no dissimilarities, there would be no doubt. Yet the case of sense-data and surfaces has all similarities and no dissimilarities. The sense-data of the hand and the part of the surface of the hand are completely similar. So the two can apparently be mistaken, but no doubt would arise as to when one was taking (mistaking) one for the other. And, of course, once the situation is described in this way, it becomes conceptually impossible for there to be a mistake. The grammar of "mistake" involves that of discovering the mistake and of there being respects in which two things differ.

Bouwsma brings Part I to a close by making some observations about the odd sort of way Moore is using the expression "the surface of my hand." Presumably one knows some things about the surface of one's hand. One can pick out his

knuckles, identify blotches, notice a scratch, etc. But suppose, as Moore supposes, that one is possessed by a doubt about whether this surface which one is familiar with, really is the surface of his hand. Now the surface of one's hand is something one can see, smell, touch, kiss, etc. -- it is something physical. But the thing which might be taken for the surface of one's hand is not something which one can smell, touch, kiss, (or see in a different way) etc. -- it is not something physical. So how can "the surface of one's hand" be used to refer to something with physical properties which can then be taken for something else which is identical with the surface of one's hand which has non-physical properties? Again, Bouwsma is working with the difficulties in understanding the meaning of an expression -- with what makes or does not make sense. Here, however, he does it not so much by showing the use of the expression in various ordinary contexts, but by describing Moore's usages of the expression as having contradictory properties.

In Part 2 of his paper, Bouwsma discusses three sets of facts, reflection about which, would lead him to the sorts of doubt that Moore regards as arising from a little reflection about sense-data. In other words, Bouwsma attempts to imagine for himself what would lead a philosopher to the theory of sense-data. Again, the role of analogy is predominant in these reflections. The first set of facts and reflection is concerned with sounds, odors, and tastes. Bouwsma notices first that it is odd that Moore's discussion of sense-data is restricted to visual sense-data. The surfaces of objects which can be mistaken for sense-data only exist with respect to vision. There is no surface of an object in connection with hearing sounds, smelling odors, or tasting tastes. But there is something interesting and similar in the cases of sounds, odors, and tastes. In connection with each, when one hears, smells, or tastes, there is a description of the sound, odor, or taste which may be described independently of the object heard, smelled, or tasted. Bouwsma gives three pairs of sentences to help illustrate this point:

- i) I hear a gnawing sound. I hear a rat.
- ii) I smell an odor. I smell a rat.
- iii) I taste a sour taste. I taste a lemon.

The first sentence in each pair can be described independently of the second, but the second can not be described independently of the first. So that if I say "I hear a rat," then one may ask, "What did it sound like?" And I then will say "It was a gnawing sound." And so on with the other pairs. The first sentence in each pair might be thought of as the sense-datum which exists independently of the object. Bouwsma, remember, is not recommending that one talk in this way, he is only showing how reflection on certain facts may lead one to Moore's view of sense-data. The first sentence in the pair, then, represents the sense-datum connected to the sensing of the object, and the second sentence is of the object itself. Now these pairs could constitute, Bouwsma suggests, a misleading analogy to the sense of sight for Moore. For if one were to construct the corresponding pair of sentences for sight, what would one put as the first sentence? "I see a rat," would clearly be the second sentence. So must there not be a corresponding first sentence which describes the sense-datum connected to the seeing of the rat? "I see a sense-datum of a rat." And of course what it is that you find when you look around for the sense-datum is the surface or part of the surface of a rat. You do not see anything else, like you hear a gnawing sound, and so you say that what you see -- the surface of a rat -- is the sense-datum. So by analogy to the other senses, one is led to visual sense-data being identical with surfaces. This is an interesting twist that Bouwsma gives to the place of visual sense-data as primary but as arising out of

comparison to sounds, odors, and tastes. It would be difficult to assess what roll it actually played in Moore's reflections. It does seem unlikely that Moore was conscious of any such analogy motivating his thinking. But then, Bouwsma's claim was not that Moore was conscious of such an analogy but that he, Bouwsma, was conscious of it in his own reflections.

A second set of facts and reflections about them concerns mirror reflections and the like, and is closely related to the first set. If one is already taken by the analogy of sounds, odors, and tastes to sights, then one may be further motivated by another aspect of this analogy as it relates to mirror reflections and other images. A mirror reflection may be described independently of the surface of an object in some way that can be said to be similar to a gnawing sound being described independently of a rat. It is true that the independent visual description of a mirror image is the same or nearly the same as the description of the surface of the object, and this is unlike the relationship between the gnawing sound and the rat. But this fact does not dissuade Moore from accepting the analogy, and it explains how Moore comes to say that the sense-data is identical or nearly identical with the surface of the object. If both the sense-data and the surface are independently describable and happen to have the same independent descriptions, then it would be understandable why one would say that they were identical or nearly so and why they could be mistaken for one another.

The third set of facts and reflection involves a misleading grammatical analogy again related to the first which, significantly, can also be seen as a grammatical analogy. The misleading grammatical analogy is captured by reflecting on the differences involved in the following look-alike sentences:

- i) This sounds like a horse.
- ii) This smells like an onion.
- iii) This tastes like a peppermint.
- iv) This looks like a million dollars.
- v) This feels like a sponge.

Bouwsma notices the difference between the first three and the last two. In order to grasp the point, focus on i and iv as representative of the different sets. In i, the description is the description of a sound. The sound is a sound like the sound of a horse. In iv, the description is not that of a look but that of an object. This object looks like a million dollars. The object is a million dollars or perhaps a person. The sentences have different uses and are used to describe different kinds of things. But the sentences have apparently similar grammatical patterns. (A lesson Wittgenstein would later teach by the introduction of the distinction between "surface and depth grammars.") And if one follows the analogy of their apparent similarity one is misled to looking at iv as being about a "look." "This 'look' has the look of a million dollars" as "This sound has the sound of a horse." And, of course, the "look" turns into the sense-data. "This sense-datum has the look of a million dollars." And: "This sense-datum is identical or nearly identical with the surface of a million dollars." And thus the analogy takes one to where one does not belong -- to see objects that no one else sees.

In the brief Part 3 of his essay, Bouwsma generalizes about what he has done or tried to do in the first two parts. He states that he has not refuted Moore's view. Moore has claimed that there are sense-data and has given directions for how to pick them out. Bouwsma has explored the difficulties in following these directions for the discovery of sense-data. He has done this by assembling numerous analogies for following those directions. He has also provided analogies for how Moore may

have come to suppose that there are sense-data. In this too Bouwsma has shown that there are difficulties in understanding how sense-data are distinguishable from the surfaces of objects. The failure to understand this distinction is a failure to understand what Moore means by "sense-data." Bouwsma comes very close to saying that there are no sense-data, but only objects. "... I discover nothing but my hand" (18). But he does not say directly that there are no sense-data. He restricts himself to what he regards as Moore's confusions in claiming to have discovered them.

Bouwsma's second paper on Moore was written sometime after 1953 when Moore's book *Some Main Problems of Philosophy* was published. Bouwsma's paper was titled "Some Reflections on Moore's Recent Book," and was first published in *The Philosophical Review*. It focuses on a passage from "What is Philosophy?" -- the first paper in Moore's book -- in which Moore describes the task of the philosopher as that of giving "a general description of the *whole* of the universe, mentioning all the most important kinds of things which we know to be in it" (129). Bouwsma sets out to reflect on Moore's conception of this task of philosophy. We know from Moore's work that some of the most important kinds of things in this universe -- which some philosophers have asserted to be a part of its description -- are sense-data, material objects, and universals. Bouwsma proposes an analogy for the philosopher's task of describing the universe: It is like an explorer's traveling the world and making discoveries about previously unknown wonders. He writes:

In order to understand this [the philosopher's task] I should like to revert to an aspect of what makes the traveler's account interesting. The traveler goes far away. He visits, and he tells about what others have not seen. He tells about what is covered by great distances, about what is hidden from eyes that stay at home. Let us say then that the traveler describes the hidden, and this is also what the philosopher does. But the hidden is now obviously of a different sort; for whereas sailors sail the seas, the philosopher stays at home. I should like now to try to understand what it is that stirs the mind and heart of the philosopher. (134)

By this analogy to an explorer, Bouwsma portrays the task of the philosopher under Moore's conception of philosophy as making discoveries. There are things previously unknown -- hidden from view -- and the philosopher's task is to discover those things. But the hidden things of the philosopher are "of a different sort" from those of the explorer, for the philosopher is investigating something quite familiar in order to discover the hidden. When the philosopher stays at home, unlike the sailor who looks in foreign places for the hidden, he, the philosopher, looks in familiar language for the hidden. The philosopher's discoveries of sense-data, material objects, and universals are made by looking through language as if it were a wall that had chinks in it, allowing glimpses of something on the other side. And Bouwsma's interest now becomes that of explaining how language leads or misleads one to the discovery of these entities. "I should now like to understand what it is that stirs the heart and mind of the philosopher." What stirs the heart and mind of the philosopher is the analogy. The analogy gives the philosopher the glimpse through the wall. It is by studying the analogies which led or might have led Moore to the discoveries of sense-data, material objects, and universals that

Bouwsma hopes to still the urge to peer through the wall and speak of wondrous entities on the other side.

The essay unfolds out of the idea of the search for and discovery of the hidden. The pattern of searching for and discovering the hidden is all around us -- explorer's, scientists, children, detectives. If one is searching for something, one must believe that there is something there to be found -- something hidden. And one must have a reason to believe this. What reasons does the philosopher have for searching? Bouwsma's essay is about these motivations. He wants to show why the philosopher is searching -- why, that is, he believes there is something hidden for him to discover. Moore, according to Bouwsma, thinks that there are numerous things which are hidden. This may come as a surprise, as Moore is the famous common sense philosopher. But Bouwsma sees Moore as seduced by the same misleading analogies as other philosophers have been into making discoveries of hidden things. Bouwsma limits himself to a discussion of three important kinds of hidden things which Moore has searched for and discovered: sense-data, material objects, and universals. What are the clues which lead Moore, or anyone, to believe in the presence of these entities?

The clue to Moore's search for the hidden in connection with sense-data lies in the uses of two sentences: 1) The envelope is rectangular; and 2) The envelope looks like a rhombus. Moore holds up an envelope, noting its rectangular shape. As he moves it around, he comments on its changing appearances including the fact that from a certain perspective it looks like a rhombus. By analogous sentences to this sentence "The envelope looks like a rhombus," we grasp that something may look like something and not be the thing that it looks like. Bouwsma develops the case of one who puts on the clothes of a policeman and thus looks like a policeman. He is not a policeman but may be mistaken for one because he looks like one. Likewise a rectangular envelope may look like a rhombus but not be a rhombus. Its sight or look or apparent shape is one thing and its real shape another. And how did this come to be? It is as if there is another entity slipped between the object and the eye -- a sense-datum. Bouwsma compares this to the placing of a piece of paper in the shape of a rhombus over the rectangular envelope. There are rhombus shaped pieces and other shaped pieces all of which may be inserted over the rectangular envelope. These thin sheets of paper are what we see and not the rectangular envelope itself. Even in the case of our seeing the rectangular envelope, we are seeing a rectangular insert laid over the rectangular envelope. This is a clue then for Moore's search for and discovery of sense-data. The clue, notice, is not that one saw something about the piece of paper inserted, like a frayed edge or smudge, but that one saw something in the analogous use of a sentence. "The man looks like a policeman, but he is not" -- "The envelope looks like a rhombus, but it is not."

The clue for the presence of "material objects" is the first sentence of this same pair, namely: "The envelope is rectangular." If the envelope looks like a rhombus and so many other shapes including a rectangle, then these various shapes are the appearances or sense-data of the actual rectangular envelope which itself is never seen. If all seeing of X's produce what looks like Y's, then Y's are always seen and X's never are. Sense-data always intervene between the "material object" and the viewer. Again, if one in putting on the clothes of a policeman thereby looks like a policeman, then what does he look like if he takes off the clothes? The person in the skin is still clothed in sense-data. He still has a look; he still looks like someone dressed in the emperor's new clothes. And so there must be a something with no look at all -- a something unseen behind all sense-data. This is the hidden

something for which the philosopher searches -- the "material object." And the clue for this material object is the analogy tucked away in the language of: "The envelope is a rectangle" and "The envelope looks like a rhombus."

Finally, there is the case of "universals," also one of the most important kinds of things and something hidden. What are the clues to their existence and discovery? In this case, Bouwsma suggests, the clues lie not with sentences but with words -- words such as "two." Words lead one to believe that there are universals by means of various analogies. One analogy is that a word, the word "two" for example, as a sign or noise, seems to be a dead thing. So where does it get its life, its meaning? It gets its meaning from the thing which it refers to. It refers to two and two has lived a long time and lived a life independent of the word "two."

A second analogy is to that of a kind of arrow which words have to point to something which they name. It is striking, is it not, that on so many different occasions the word "two" is used, but it names only one thing -- the same thing -- each time it is used. It is, as if there were an arrow in the sign which points somehow to the thing it names, no matter how or when it gets used. And each of us, if we speak English, is able to understand what the arrow is pointing toward when we hear the noise "two." The intentional arrow points to something hidden, something that must be there even though it is not in full view.

These analogies of life and arrows suggest that something hidden corresponds to the visible or audible sign. It is as if, to use a third analogy, the word "two" in the question "What is two?" is functioning the way "Elizabeth" is functioning in the question, "Who is Elizabeth?" One asks, "And who is Elizabeth?" and the question might be answered by pointing to Elizabeth. The proper name names the person whom one identifies by pointing to the one called "Elizabeth." So too the word "two" might be explained by pointing to the two which the word "two" names, only this two remains hidden. "Two," that is, is mistaken to function as a proper name. And what is this thing which the name names? It is the two which is always there behind all uses, the two which is pointed to by the word "two," and the two which gives life to the dead noise "two." It is the two which must be there in some hidden mental form to be the meaning of the word "two." It is what philosophers have called a "universal." It is hidden, but discoverable.

By means of these analogies, Bouwsma has tried to show how it was that Moore came to search for and believe he had discovered these entities. Bouwsma takes Moore to be representative of other philosophers in that they make discoveries by means of clues which they find in their language. Moore is more careful and more rigorous than the others. If someone as good as Moore could be misled in these ways, then it is not surprising that any other philosopher could. In this essay, one should notice, Bouwsma not only uncovers and provides analogies which lead Moore to believe in the existence of these entities, but he also provides the marvelous analogy to the explorer making discoveries as the insight into the nature of philosophy. It is this analogy which Morris Lazerowitz calls "Bouwsma's paradox." And it is this analogy in which Bouwsma reflects his understanding of Wittgenstein's radical departure from Moore and traditional philosophical investigations.

3

I would like to conclude by making some summary generalizations about Bouwsma's use of analogy in these two papers. Again, the general purpose of Bouwsma's producing all these analogies is to show how Moore came to search for

and believe that he had discovered various entities, particularly sense-data. This showing of the motivations for the discoveries of these entities is a completion of the philosophical method which Bouwsma had painstakingly acquired from Wittgenstein. The first elements of this method are those of presenting the sense and presenting the nonsense of philosophical propositions. If philosophical propositions are seen as nonsense, then the question as to how one could come to talk this nonsense arises. Hence the final element of presenting grammatical analogies to uncover the motivations for these philosophical confusions.

In the first paper, "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data," Bouwsma presents many analogies which can be read not simply as uncovering Moore's motivation for talking nonsense, but as refutations of Moore's views. If sense-data and surfaces, for example, are indistinguishable, then one might be tempted to say that Bouwsma's intended conclusion is that there really are no such things as sense-data. And this conclusion would be the denial of Moore's conclusion that there are sense-data. Again, Moore himself reads Bouwsma in this way. In his "A Reply to My Critics" in the Schilpp volume, Moore writes: "But I think that (largely through my fault) he did not understand how I was proposing to use the term, and therefore thought that the sense in which I was proposing to use it, was such that he himself was inclined to think that, in that sense, there are no such things as sense-data" (647). Translated, this comes to: Moore believes that Bouwsma is arguing that there are no such things as sense-data.

Throughout his reply to Bouwsma, Moore regards Bouwsma as arguing against his claims about sense-data. He takes Bouwsma as holding an opposite view. He also takes Bouwsma as showing that he, Moore, has not been as clear as he should have been in giving directions for finding sense-data. And Moore thanks Bouwsma for helping him become clearer in giving those directions: "Mr. Bouwsma ... in his exceedingly able and original essay, first tries to shew that the directions which I give for 'picking out' a specimen of the 'sort of things I mean by sense-data' are not clear ..." (627) Moore understands, I believe, that Bouwsma is not writing this paper in order to help him give clearer instructions for finding sense-data. But he does not understand, I believe, that Bouwsma was not trying to refute him. Bouwsma's work with failing to understand Moore's directions for finding sense-data is work aimed at showing that Moore has not yet made sense with his claims about sense-data. Bouwsma is asking: "Is it like this?" Then he provides an analogy which shows what might sensibly be said, but that Moore's directions are not sensible in that way. Is it like picking out a red marble from a box? Is it like Isaac picking out Esau's arm on Jacob? Yes and No. These analogies regarding directions together with the other analogies in the paper are not aimed at reflection but at untangling conceptual confusion and showing its sources.

The first paper of Bouwsma's was, as I indicated above, written some ten years before the second. Over those ten years Bouwsma's understanding of Wittgenstein matured. So in defense of Moore's reading of Bouwsma -- that he was trying to refute Moore's theory of sense-data -- there is a way of reading what Bouwsma wrote as refutation. Bouwsma, for example, says that part of the surface of something seems to have physical and non-physical properties at the same time. That looks like Bouwsma is refuting Moore by saying that Moore has contradicted himself. And Bouwsma compares Moore's remarks about the identity of surfaces and sense-data to twins being in the same body. That looks like Bouwsma is saying that Moore says that there are two things -- surfaces and sense-data -- but there is in reality only one thing, namely surfaces, i.e. there are no sense-data. Now in spite of

my suggesting that this is not the way to read Bouwsma, his writing at this time did exhibit tones of his prior habits of mind in doing philosophy. While his grasp of *The Blue Book* is complete in the first paper, his style of analysis has not yet achieved the indirectness and subtlety of his later work. I do not find this directness and tendency toward refutation in his second paper on Moore. And so I would direct the reader's attention to that development in Bouwsma's appropriation of method from the first paper to the second.

Finally I would like to call attention again to the dovetailing of Bouwsma, Moore, and Wittgenstein in the two papers. Moore was a starting point for Bouwsma with his refutations of idealism and his desire for common sense and clarity. But Bouwsma came to see the inadequacies of Moore -- of course with Wittgenstein's help. Moore was a starting point for Wittgenstein in certain ways as well. Moore literally was his teacher at Cambridge, but I mean that Moore provided Wittgenstein with some starting points for his philosophy during the writing of *The Blue Book* and afterwards as well. Why is there no common sense answer to a philosophical problem? And what is wrong with refuting idealism by claiming to know that one's outstretched hand is a hand? Some of *The Blue Book* and *On Certainty* can be read as Wittgenstein's wrestling with Moore. Alice Ambrose reports that Moore sat in Wittgenstein's lectures when he returned to Cambridge in the early 1930s when Wittgenstein was also dictating the notes of *The Blue Book*. She reports that Wittgenstein used Moore as a test to see if he had made himself clear to the class. Despite disclaimers on both sides, Moore influenced Wittgenstein's work. Moore gave him starting points -- views to which he reacted. The "discovery of a method" which Wittgenstein spoke of in his lectures was set off against Moore. And Bouwsma's grasp and appropriation of that method was also, at least initially, set off against Moore. The temporal sequence of this development in Bouwsma corresponds to the temporal sequence of his sending his students to study with Moore and their returning to tell him of Wittgenstein.

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5

Without Proof Or Evidence: Bouwsma and Kierkegaard

The title *Without Proof or Evidence* was taken from several of Bouwsma's papers. He, of course, did not write the papers in the book as a book. Their collection was made by other people -- J. L. Craft and myself. And so it is not as if Bouwsma tried to present a unified theme or set of themes in a book which he titled *Without Proof or Evidence*. In fact, Craft and I found ourselves dividing Bouwsma's finished papers into two natural divisions that subsequently made up the two volumes *Toward a New Sensibility* and *Without Proof or Evidence*. It was a natural division, I believe, and I do not believe that we had any difficulty deciding in which volume to place any given paper. The naturalness of the division comes from the fact that all of the papers in *Toward a New Sensibility* have to do with the intelligibility of philosophical language. They discuss or make use of the criteria of intelligibility. Most of these papers actually work with some philosopher's sentences, teasing out the nonsense by comparison to the sense of ordinary or intelligible language. The papers of *Without Proof or Evidence*, however, take the language of Scripture as their focal point. The language of Scripture, in these papers, replaces ordinary language expressions as the way back from the confusions of philosophy to intelligible descriptions of the subjects at hand.

Although this principle of distinguishing the papers is what we found ourselves using from the first reading of the papers, to their final publications, Bouwsma was aware of this principle independently of any knowledge of what we would later do with his papers. In the paper "Kierkegaard's Monstrous Illusion" he explains this principle of distinction between work in philosophy of religion and other work in philosophy in connection with the work of Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein. He writes:

So there is an analogy in what we may describe as the logical aspects of these investigations. There is illusion in both cases. The task in both cases is conceived of as that of dispelling illusions. The illusion is in both cases one of misunderstanding certain language. Here I see that I must be careful. Both those who seek to understand ordinary language, and those who seek to understand the Scriptures, run into confusion due to mistaken expectations concerning what the language must mean. Let me get this straight. In the work of Wittgenstein there is ordinary language we understand. That ordinary language is related to words or expressions that give us trouble. In ordinary language we discover the corrective of the language which expresses the confusion. In the work of Kierkegaard there corresponds to ordinary language in Wittgenstein the language of Scripture which Kierkegaard understands. Without this later assumption Kierkegaard cannot be effective. And this is not how it is in Wittgenstein. There, ordinary language is taken to be language which we all understand. Here, there is agreement. But Kierkegaard's task is in that way more formidable. He has first to teach us how to understand the language of Scripture. (Bouwsma 85)

Bouwsma saw his tasks dividing up in these same two ways under the direction of the two great philosophers in his life -- Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard. From Wittgenstein he learned the significance of the ordinary language, which he already loved, for philosophy. And from Kierkegaard he learned the significance of the language of Scripture, which he already loved, for philosophy of religion. His task in these essays then became, like Kierkegaard's, to teach us something of the language of Scripture.

The papers of *Without Proof or Evidence* then center around the idea of the language of Scriptures being the focus of philosophical thinking about Christianity. Further, this central theme is one that connects to Bouwsma's understanding of Kierkegaard. In spite of the fact that Bouwsma did not set out to write a book about this subject matter, it is the central subject matter of the papers of this book. It is the subject matter I would like to present and to explain in what follows.

I could begin with almost any paper in the book to make this point. I will take some sentences from his paper "The Invisible" to let Bouwsma make it directly. In 1969 he was asked to deliver the Howard W. Heintz Memorial Lecture at the University of Arizona. In the letter of invitation it was proposed that he give "some impression of how a philosopher in the Wittgenstein tradition might go about 'doing philosophy' in this area [philosophy of religion]." Bouwsma begins the paper by preparing his audience for his stylistic idiosyncrasies. This paper, he writes, has no beginning, no middle, no end. He is not a long-thought thinker, but rather a short-thought thinker -- he writes philosophical fragments. And then he comes to the subject matter of the lecture: "There is no subject more bewildering and more frustrating than the subject of religion or, as in the present circumstances, than Christianity. And this is because of the role of the Scriptures. I might say that this is because we do not know how to read the Scriptures ..." (27). The remainder of the lecture is about reading the Scriptures, the role of the Scriptures in the Christian community, and the role of the Scriptures in understanding Christianity. The title "The Invisible" refers to God and is taken from the eleventh chapter of *Hebrews*: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Throughout the lecture, Bouwsma presents the idea, in his short-thought thinker style, that reading and understanding the Scriptures is something more difficult than we had imagined. We believe that we understand them, but we are under an illusion of understanding. He writes some surprising sentences which get the reader's attention on this point: "God does not speak or write English or any other earthly language, no matter how much like English or any other language the language of Scripture looks and sounds like English" (31). "I think I had better say that we cannot say what understanding the Scriptures is" (30). "I meant also to insist that God in this book, or God speaking through this book, requires of men a special reading, and that this, particularly among the learned, the wise in this world, involves a constant struggle against habits of mind and understanding" (33).

The theme of our not understanding the language of Scripture is not, as I said, limited to this paper. Here are samples of similar striking sentences on this theme throughout the book: "If we regard Wittgenstein as teaching us how to read, and of course, not only how to read, but to speak as well, reading and discussing philosophy, we may in the same way, or in a similar way, regard Kierkegaard as teaching us how to read and discuss the Scriptures. There are in both cases illusions of intelligibility ..." (84); "Men have treated the Scriptures as God's way of giving us certain information ... The Scriptures are not a body of knowledge, a

hyper-metaphysical revelation ..." (84f); "...those who seek to understand the Scriptures run into confusion due to mistaken expectations concerning what the language must mean ..." (85); "The language of Scriptures, misunderstood in this way, killed and stuffed in human heads, presented Kierkegaard with the problem of taking this language out into the open and breathing life into it" (94); "Of course, the Scriptures are not another book in metaphysics. How to show that? The grammar of metaphysics versus the grammar of the Scriptures" (140); "What's the problem? Here it is, a book of religious language. You've been reading it all of your life -- now what do you want? Confusion. You may read it as secular history, or as poetry or literature, as philosophy -- in which case all that is religiously essential is philosophically accidental -- hence not only dispensable but a nuisance. Teaching people how to read the Scriptures -- Kierkegaard" (148). One may notice how frequently Bouwsma associates this idea with Kierkegaard's task.

I should like now to consider this idea in connection with Bouwsma's understanding of Kierkegaard. Although only two papers in the collection are about Kierkegaard, all of the papers bear the marks of his influence on Bouwsma. I do not know when he began reading Kierkegaard, but when I began working with him in 1964, he was deeply immersed in reading him in graduate seminars. (William Bouwsma believes it was in the late 1930s when Martin Heineken arrived at Nebraska to work with his father, and that Heineken introduced him to Kierkegaard.) He wrote about and discussed essential ideas in the literature such as subjectivity, the Teacher, the condition necessary for receiving the Truth, etc. But as Bouwsma makes use of his understanding of Kierkegaard in the papers of *Without Proof or Evidence*, these are not the topics discussed. Actually there are no topics of Kierkegaard discussed directly. It is Bouwsma's understanding of what Kierkegaard's mission was that Bouwsma makes use of and frequently mentions directly in the papers. That mission, as Bouwsma understood it, perhaps because of his sensitivity to the importance of language for philosophy which he developed with Wittgenstein, that mission was to rid thinkers of the illusions which philosophy created out of the language of Christianity -- of the Scriptures. It may sound odd to readers of Kierkegaard that he was concerned with language or the language of the Scriptures. But to Bouwsma, who had learned to suspect language as the source of philosophical confusions, the parallel in Kierkegaard, who would untangle the confusions surrounding our understanding of Christianity, was apparent. In Kierkegaard's time, philosophers believed they understood the language of Christianity which was ultimately the language of the Scriptures. To dispel this illusion of understanding the language, Kierkegaard had to return to the source -- to the language of the Scriptures. But here the problem became complicated as it was the familiarity with the source that was responsible for the illusion in the beginning. Hegel and his followers were attempting to explain the Scriptures -- the essence of Christianity, and the state church of Denmark had made people comfortable by means of the Scriptures. So Kierkegaard's task of returning to the Scriptures to dispel the illusions of understanding of the Scriptures was made immensely more difficult. He had to find a way around the very language he needed in order to restore clarity to Christianity. His task, as noted, was more difficult in this respect than Wittgenstein's. Wittgenstein could use ordinary language to restore clarity to the philosophical confusions which occupied him. Bouwsma, because of his work with Wittgenstein's ideas, could see Kierkegaard's work in this light.

Here is a longer quote from "The Invisible" in which he directly identifies his understanding of Kierkegaard's mission as involving a return to the language of the

Scriptures. It comes from the paragraph in which he has already made the surprising remark that God does not speak or write English. I will quote some of the relevant parts:

I have already suggested that we do not know how to read [the Scriptures]. By this I do not mean that we open the book, try to read, discover that we cannot, and then close the book. This we might do, were we to open a book in a foreign language. ... Our troubles are of another kind. We open the book. We read. The words are familiar. We are well acquainted with the whole book, perhaps too well acquainted. Kierkegaard writes of obtaining, "a little peace for the weary Christian terminology, a rest of which it may stand greatly in need, unfathomable and calmly profound as it is in itself, but made breathless and almost unmeaning in current usage ... Christianity tossed about and perplexed in current speech." So we read and understand -- so we think. If then, we do not understand, we must consider how this can be, that we should read a book with which we could scarcely be more familiar... (27)

With Kierkegaard the weary peace for Christian terminology was, in part, from the turmoil which Hegel had introduced to it. Hegel had damaged the language of incarnation, creation, sin, even of God. I am thinking of his idea that Christianity is the mythical expression of his philosophy -- that the incarnation is the event of self-consciousness in human history, etc. And so Kierkegaard writes a corrective to this. But in doing so he feels that he cannot simply return to the language of Scriptures, for it was precisely this language which Hegel chose to be the vehicle for his philosophical theory. Kierkegaard must return to a more primitive reading of the Scriptures -- one which finds the Scriptures in a state prior to their being interpreted by an Hegelian reading. This requires providing an account of the Scriptures, particularly the gospels, in which the familiar language used there and in the church creeds etc., is not used. And so he provides us with new language: "the Teacher," "the occasion," "the moment," "the Truth," "the absolute Paradox," etc. -- the terminology of the *Philosophical Fragments*. It is not the language of the gospels, but it is a careful representation of the gospels. His new account shows us, reminds us, of the paradoxical nature of Christianity as contrasted with its being a philosophical theory complete with good arguments. The account contrasts Socrates to Christ, truth from an inward dialectic to truth from revelation, philosophy to religious belief. Notice the difference Kierkegaard says: the language of Scripture is not the language of philosophy.

Kierkegaard strove to show the difference, not just between Hegelian philosophy and Christianity, but between philosophy in general and Christianity. He sometimes cast this as the difference between objectivity and subjectivity. Objectivity involved developing hypotheses, collecting evidence, and holding beliefs at arm's length until one had justification for accepting them. Objectivity was the method of science, but it was also the mode of speculative philosophical theory-making as well. Subjectivity, by contrast, attended to the manner of life which one lived. Did one's life reflect the beliefs to which one assented? Usually Socrates was chosen as the model for subjectivity, as Socrates strove to give expression to the truths he understood in the details of his life. But it was Christianity on which the Socratic model was to shed light. Christianity was a matter of subjectivity and not objectivity. Christianity could not exist in the objective mode. It could not be

proved or explained with philosophical or scientific arguments. It could not be held tentatively, at arm's length, but must be embraced as salvation. Here was where the arguments of the philosophers went wrong. It was not that they failed to prove or made blunders in logic; it was that they made a category mistake. They had mistaken Christianity for philosophy -- subjectivity for objectivity.

So too Bouwsma saw the arguments of the philosophers on religious matters as misplaced objectivity. He saw this misplacement as a result of the misunderstanding of the language of Scripture. How did this come about? Perhaps in a variety of ways, but the central explanation that he comes back to repeatedly is that philosophers have operated on the unexamined presupposition that all language had only one purpose: namely, to convey information. Again, that this is not so is an insight he gained from his work with Wittgenstein. It is a great temptation, for a variety of reasons, to look at the language of Scripture as conveying information about God -- revelation is telling us what we do not know. So then, revelation is knowledge. And knowledge is what philosophers know best. We know how it is developed. We know how it is tested. We know what it takes to have it. Christian knowledge is special, but it takes its place among the other "deliverances of reason" (Alvin Plantinga). There are parts of it which can be proved and parts of it which cannot be proved but accepted as the basis for other beliefs. As the language of the Scriptures looks like knowledge, like conveyed information, it gets mistakenly treated as knowledge by philosophers. Philosophers then, those at least who are favorably disposed towards Christianity, take up the task of supporting, defending, and knowing this knowledge. It is sometimes called Christian philosophy. Bouwsma regarded it as "Christian nonsense." He saw it as having similar roots to other philosophical nonsense, namely in the misunderstandings of the nature and function of our language.

The language of the Scriptures, Bouwsma warns, is not the language of metaphysics: "The Scriptures are not a body of knowledge, a hyper-metaphysical revelation ..." (85); and again, "Of course, the Scriptures are not another book in metaphysics. How to show that? The grammar of metaphysics versus the grammar of the Scriptures" (140). The idea of their being metaphysics connects to the idea of their being knowledge, i.e. to the idea that they convey information. In "Lengthier Zettel," he reflects on the question: Why do we still read Kierkegaard? We do not read Hegel any more, so what good is Kierkegaard's polemic against Hegel and world-historical knowledge, etc? Bouwsma suggests an answer. We still pursue knowledge with a passion, or at least some of us do. We still desire to know about our origins, about who we are, what kind of beings we are, what sort of place the world is, and what, if anything, is required of us. We turn to science to satisfy this desire for knowledge. But we do more. We treasure knowledge for its own sake. We hoard it and are consumed by the pursuit of it. In this spirit we approach the Scriptures, which may, on the face of it, seem to be a book offering knowledge about these and similar matters. So, as thinkers practiced in the skills of coming to knowledge, we apply our skills to the language of the Scriptures. We take note of the "propositions" which convey the essential information. We develop hypotheses, collect evidence, and produce proof for them. We work out the problems and paradoxes. We do what we are good at in other fields of knowledge and develop here a body of metaphysical knowledge.

We may study the words of the Scriptures then, looking for propositions about the origins of the world, the self, freedom, God. There are in the Scriptures accounts of the creation. There are accounts of God's nature, of human nature, of

morality, and of determinism -- was not Pharaoh's heart hardened? So why should the philosopher not ask his questions of these accounts? What is God? Why should anything exist? What is a human being? How can a body survive death? How can a good God allow evil to happen? These are the questions of metaphysics put to the information conveyed by Scripture. Some propositions are given in Scripture, so we improve our body of knowledge which begins there. We make it consistent. We develop the complete theory. We give support to it as we find some people who do not believe it or as we feel we need to have it defended to ourselves. It is a mission for the philosopher who is a Christian. Just as other missionaries have carried the gospel to far off countries or built hospitals or translated Scripture into every language, so too there is a mission for the Christian philosopher: to make the metaphysical knowledge of Christianity apparent.

And what now is wrong with this? What has gone unnoticed? What has produced the illusion that the language of Scriptures is understandable as metaphysical knowledge? It is that the language of Scripture is taken as conveying information. If it conveys information, then we may organize it and eliminate its inconsistencies. If it is information, we may construct proofs and arguments for the elements and compounds of it. We may pave the way for the information to be believed.

In the lead paper of the volume, "Faith, Evidence, and Proof," Bouwsma gets the reader to notice what has gone unnoticed about the concept of "evidence" in the taking of the Scriptures as conveying information. The concept of evidence fits where support for claims is called for. But in the context of reading the Scriptures, as they were meant to be read, the idea of looking for evidence is a conceptual confusion. He writes with unusual directness: "It is not that evidence is lacking. Evidence is inconceivable" (11); "this belief [Abraham's] is of an altogether different order. For this there can be no evidence" (9); "It is rather like looking for air in joy ..." (18). Evidence is inconceivable not simply because the Scriptures are not conveying metaphysical knowledge, but because of what the Scriptures are. And here, it is not that I could say simply what they are for Bouwsma, but I can say that how they are to be read involves the transformation of a life. God's revelation involves the transformation of the life of the one to whom it is a revelation. ("the key to the understanding of the Scriptures is the promise of eternal life" (85).) This applies not only to the accounts of those heroes of faith whose stories are recorded in the Scriptures, but it applies as well to those who read the Scriptures and have come to faith. To receive revelation is to have one's life transformed -- to become a new being.

This transformation happens by means of the response to God made by one to whom the revelation comes. Revelation, in this respect, can be understood as God's giving directions for what one is to do with his life. When God speaks, it is not in order that one may write down the propositions of knowledge, but that one would know what he was supposed to do and be. The measure then of whether he has understood the revelation would be whether he has done or tried to do what God required. The revelation may be thought of as command, and the receiving of it or understanding of it as obedience or at least as requiring obedience. Thus the transformation of one's life. If one should hear a command and say, "Oh, I see," but then continue to behave as if there were no command, we would not suppose that he did understand. Obedience is the measure of understanding.

In order to make clear this insight about revelation and the transformation of one's life, Bouwsma provides ample illustrations from the Scriptures. In "Faith,

Evidence and Proof," as in a number of other papers, he holds up stories of the heroes of faith. What makes them heroes? God has spoken to them, revealed himself to them, and they have responded obediently. To Abraham God said: "Go to this new land"; "You will have a son in your old age"; and "take Isaac to the mountain and sacrifice him." And Abraham obeyed or tried to obey God. His obedience made him the person he was. It transformed him. He is the father of faith because he obeyed God and became the person God required him to be. So too with Moses, Noah, and St. Paul, each of whom Bouwsma presents as faithful -- obedient to God's commands. Their belief and their obedience were intertwined such that one may not understand the one without the other. Moses is told to say thus and such to Pharaoh and to lead God's people. Noah is told to build an ark. Saul is told, out of a light on the road to Damascus, to go into Damascus and take on a new life. In obedience he was transformed from Saul to Paul. It was Paul's obedience to the voice, Bouwsma recounts, that he used as his defense before King Agrippa when he was called upon to give an account of the faith that was within him. This was no metaphysical defense -- not a presentation with proof and evidence for the knowledge he held. In any case, Paul was obedient. I have been struck by the patience with which Bouwsma develops these illustrations from Scriptures on this point about belief and obedience. They are for him the essential corrective for the misunderstanding that the language of Scripture is language which conveys knowledge.

The influence of Wittgenstein on Bouwsma is present in this use of Scripture as corrective to philosophical confusions about religious language. As ordinary language was used to show what sense was in connection with the philosophical confusion of Descartes and Berkeley, the details of the language of the exchanges between God and Abraham, Moses, Noah, and St. Paul are used to bring one back from nonsense to sense in philosophy of religion. As he learned to do with Wittgenstein, Bouwsma steps back from the cases and provides the grammatical insights which show what sort of mistakes are being made and how they arise. Here is a selected quotation from "Faith, Evidence, and Proof" on the grammar of the word "belief":

I have now suggested that the word "belief" gives us trouble, and now I will add, no wonder. For the words "belief" and "believe" are used not only in the religious context but in other contexts. And in some of those at least we may say that there is evidence for what one believes... It must now be obvious that the word "believe" in the religious context will certainly tempt the unwary and may tempt too those who know better.

In the religious context the words "belief" and "obedience" are closely related. The passages from Scriptures I quoted earlier show this. (20)

Notice the move from "surface grammar" to "depth grammar" in this quote. On the surface, religious belief and non-religious belief look the same. They may be mistaken for one another. Insofar as they are the same, one may suppose that there is evidence in both cases. When we look in depth at their grammars, however, we see differences. We look in depth by looking at primary cases of religious language -- we look in the Scriptures. And now we see, not the collection of evidence, but obedience. The grammars of "obedience" and "belief" are connected under the surface where the grammar of "evidence" has obliterated their

connection. These habits of philosophical thinking which Bouwsma developed in reading Wittgenstein are present everywhere in his work in philosophy of religion. On this matter there should, of course, be no surprise.

This general point that attending to the details of the language in the Scriptures will serve to correct the confusions which have arisen out of misreadings of the same Scriptures, is a key idea in understanding another tact which Bouwsma takes. Wittgenstein taught the technique of attending to detail -- to the particulars of ordinary expressions -- which would correct our tendency to generalize and our being captivated by our generalizations. Bouwsma saw the philosopher's work in philosophy of religion as generalization which needed this kind of correction. "Scriptural language is used to convey information." "God is a most perfect being." "God is the ground of all being." These generalizations, as well as others connected with confusions in philosophy of religion, require the detail of Scriptural language for their untanglement and clarification. In the case of these philosophical problems, however, there is more involved than simply that of correcting generalizations by means of attention to particulars. What the Scriptures are relates to the language of the religious community in a special way. While in other philosophy we have philosophical puzzlement and ordinary language, in the philosophy of religion we have philosophical puzzlement and the language of the community of faith as the ordinary language. But the language of the latter is not so ordinary. What is different about the language of the community of faith is that it is based upon Scripture which is taken by the community to be the word of God -- revelation. Our ordinary language is not developed out of nor checked against such a collection of writings. What religious people say about God, however, can be understood as based upon the content of the "Holy Scriptures" where the elements of God and faith are presented.

Bouwsma was fond of quoting Wittgenstein's remark "Theology as grammar." The way in which he thought of this was that just as words in our ordinary language had specific ways in which they could be used, the words special to the community of faith had specific ways in which they could be used. It was the Scriptures that showed how the latter could be used. The Scriptures in this case may be thought of as the primary collection of the words of the people of faith together with instruction on how they are to be used. The Scriptures present the words "God," "faith," "sin," etc., in the context of the lives of the characters in Scripture and the various forms of literature that are collected there. This primary collection serves as the source for the rest of theological and religious language. As people in the community of faith read the Scriptures and attempted to understand them, they produced theological language. As they disagreed about how to interpret the Scriptures and as heresies developed, they wrote creeds which presented the correct way of understanding over against certain prevalent misunderstandings. This too was theological language. The remark "theology as grammar" refers to this relationship between theological language and the Scriptures. Theological language was the result of working out an interpretation of -- what it made sense to say of -- the Scriptures. The Scriptures became the guidelines for how to talk about God, faith, sin, etc. "God" is who the Scriptures say God is. "Faith" is what the Scriptures say faith is. It is not as if one can go to God and describe what one sees or interview him and report on what he says. Neither can one rely on what he feels God is or desires God to be. The language-games of "God" cannot be played in that way. The Scriptures show us that too. The Scriptures, the revealed word of God, tell us what kind of object God is. As grammar tell us the essence of an object,

the Scriptures provide us with the grammar of "God" (and the other special words of the community of faith) and so tell what kind of object God is.

This is something Kierkegaard understood as well. Although it was the language of the Scriptures which had to be enlivened for his age, Kierkegaard relied upon that language in order to enliven and re-present it. The teacher is none other than Jesus, etc. The descriptions of what the Teacher does and how he relates to the truth all come from the Scriptures. The presentation of the idea of the Absolute Paradox specifically shows Kierkegaard's understanding of the role of the Scriptures in theology. After Johannes Climacus sets forth the idea that left to ourselves we have no way of knowing how to come to talk about the Unknown, he calls the Unknown "God." "It is nothing more than a name we assign to it," Climacus writes. But of course it is the name of God -- the God who created the world, promised Abraham, instructed Moses, etc. It is not just a name, not a meaningless sign, which he assigns to it -- the name "God" carries with it all of the details of the concept as it is presented in the Scriptures. And now how are we to understand this? God is the "Unknown." We have no way of making discoveries about him by an investigation of nature. Yet we know how to talk about God. It is Kierkegaard's insight that this is possible only by means of the Scriptures. It is in the Scriptures that the language of God is taught. And apart from this language there is no language about the Unknown -- no knowledge of the Unknown.

My interest here is not in claiming that Bouwsma got his idea from Kierkegaard (nor from Wittgenstein), but rather in seeing what the idea was and in showing that it was consistent with Bouwsma's reading of Kierkegaard. Bouwsma's understanding of Kierkegaard was that the Scriptures play the central role in our understanding any language about God. They teach us initially how to talk of God, and it is to them we must return to correct the philosophical confusions which arise in the philosophy of religion. In his paper "Adventure in Verification," Bouwsma imagines a character, Xenophanes, who sets out to verify the accounts of the gods in Homer. The paper was written at a time when Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* had generated much heat over the question of whether religious language was meaningful if it was not verifiable. Bouwsma wrote the paper to address this question. But in the process of addressing verification, he shows understanding of the role of the Scripture in thinking philosophically about religion. Xenophanes is a skeptic and wants to find out if what others have said about Zeus and other gods is true. He treats these claims as information and wants to know if it is true information. How should he go about this? He gets a copy of Homer and reads it, looking for sentences which he might check if he were to climb Mt. Olympus and observe the gods. He sets out to write a verified theology. The adventure in verification follows. He climbs the mountain, sees what he can see, and fails in his task. But the understanding of the role of Scriptures is that religious language in any community of believers will be related to primary sources -- a scripture or scriptures (though it may in some traditions be oral). That primary source will be the reference point for the other religious language in that tradition. So if one wants to understand what someone in 400 B.C. in Athens claims about Zeus, he must read the primary source -- Homer -- to see what sort of being Zeus was. It will do no good to climb the mountains to verify whether Zeus was immortal. That is not a verifiable sort of thing. One must read Homer to see if Zeus was immortal. It might be appropriate to climb Olympus to verify whether Zeus caused earthquakes by some action of his. And while Xenophanes failed in his attempt to verify this, the fact that it might be appropriate to climb a mountain to find Zeus, etc., was

something too that required a reading of Homer. In Homer, Zeus and other gods are said to live on Olympus and, in Homer, he is said to have caused earthquakes. So it is in Homer that we find out what sort of being Zeus is. Just so, in Christianity one must read the Scriptures to find out what sort of being God is.

The function of this understanding of the Scriptures as the primary source of understanding "God" and the other key words of religious language is to call us back from the philosophical confusions generated in thinking about religion which are caused by misunderstandings of the nature of religious language. In philosophy we are puzzled by the word "God." What is God? We are, as usual in philosophy, dealing with generalities. Spinoza and Tillich, Bouwsma reminds us, deal with the word "God" in philosophical generalities without such reference to the Scriptures from which they might have learned how to work with the concept. In any case, the sorts of philosophical questions with which we are concerned arise within the community familiar with the Scriptures, and are to be dealt with by reference to the Scriptures. This is not arbitrary. It is an essential concept in religion. If the question arises among Mohammedans, the same sort of difficulties must give way to the words of the Koran. There are the Jewish, the Mohammedan, the Christian conceptions -- each having its basis in corresponding scriptures.

"God" cannot be dealt with in general. The concept of God varies with the various traditions. Apart from those traditions and their primary sources, there is no account of God. Neither is there any philosophical means of getting such a description. Bouwsma makes this point dramatically in "A Lengthy Zettel" with the repetition of the remark: "there is no God in general." "If a Jew were writing about God, his God, that is, there is no God in general, whom would he mention?" Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. "If Harum El Raschid ... were writing about God, his God, there is no God in general, whom would he mention?" Mohammed. And so on. "And what if a man were to write about God in general ... what name would this writer mention ...? I have not said 'his' God since God in general is an idea and no God ... what name does the writer mention?" None (144).

The writer about God in general is the philosopher. The philosopher works with generalities -- "the ground of all being," "Substance" -- and with hypotheses, evidence, argument, and proof. The God of the philosopher is not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The God of the philosopher does not do anything. He does not make promises, give orders, save his people. The God of the philosopher does not require anything of anyone. And so there are no heroes of faith. There is no collection of stories of these heroes of faith. Whom should the writer about God in general mention? There is no one to mention. His book will consist of arguments and people. It will be dry and without passion. It will not capture the decisiveness, the risk, the fear and trembling of the saint. These are the categories of faith. God in general and the book about God in general will lack all the essential categories of faith in God. To find the latter we must turn to the pages of *Genesis* or of the *Koran* or of the *Gospel of Matthew*, etc.

I have tried to say what insight Bouwsma had into the philosophy of religion. The insight was that the confusions in thinking about religion, and Christianity specifically, arose from not understanding how to read the scriptures of that religion -- the *New Testament* particularly, in the case of Christianity. The problems arise primarily because the philosopher mistakes the language of the Scriptures for language conveying information. The connection is to look closely at the language through the various stories, psalms, histories, etc., to see how the language requires of the reader a response to God in faith. "God's revelation," Bouwsma writes, "is

a matter of putting one into harness"(15). He reminds the philosopher that the grammar of "obedience," is closely related to that of "belief" in its religious use. The various other strands of Bouwsma's work to which I have tried to call attention in this collection, are all connected to this central insight. Again, the papers were not written as a book, and so Bouwsma, the short-thought thinker, did not organize his thoughts on these matters as if one lecture or paper would supply what the others did not with respect to the long-thought of the whole book. Nevertheless, the short-thoughts all fit together as a powerful piece of philosophizing which may do some incalculable good for someone tied in knots on the subject of Christianity.

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Bouwsma The Reader: A Philosophy of Education

"The maximum of what one human being can do for another ... is to inspire him with concern and unrest."

-- Kierkegaard

Bouwsma's place in philosophy was that of a teacher. He did not call himself a teacher, and this was because, I suppose, he did not teach some doctrine nor body of information. He did not impart information. In place of information, there was the activity of trying to understand what someone else meant by what he or she had said. Bouwsma philosophized by means of what others said or wrote. He did not produce any new theory or knowledge himself, nor pass such things on to others. He said of himself that he was barren. Limited to these respects, Bouwsma as a teacher may be compared to Socrates.

Bouwsma's grasp of Wittgenstein was magnificent. The importance of the question: What is the meaning of a word? for philosophy was central to Bouwsma's work. But all of this he dutifully and willingly acknowledged belonged to Wittgenstein, at least with respect to originality. Bouwsma could not even say, as Moore attributed to Wittgenstein, that with regard to Wittgenstein's own work it did not matter whether his results were true or not: what mattered was that a method had been found (G.E. Moore, "Wittgenstein's Lectures 1930-33," *Philosophical Papers* 315). Bouwsma had not found this method in the sense that Wittgenstein did. And yet, in one sense, Bouwsma did find this method. He did discover, in a sense, the importance of the question of the meaning of a word for philosophical investigations. He did discover for himself and in his own way, what Wittgenstein discovered. He had appropriated it so well, in fact, that he could, and did, write marvelous essays, making use of Wittgenstein, without ever mentioning Wittgenstein's name nor explaining any one of his ideas. Bouwsma had thus appropriated Wittgenstein primarily by reading him. And his application of Wittgenstein's method to the works of other philosophers, e.g. Plato, Descartes, Moore, should also be characterized as Bouwsma's having learned to *read* these philosopher's.

Again then, Bouwsma's place in philosophy was that of a teacher. He did not propose new theories. He did not discover nor impart knowledge. He did not even discover a method, but appropriated one. And so the question must arise: What in the world could he have been teaching?! Teachers teach something. And teachers reputed to be remarkable, as Bouwsma was, teach whatever they teach in some remarkable style. So what did he teach in a remarkable style? Put simply, he taught people how to read. His teaching of reading was not of the reading learned by beginners -- the recognition first of letters then of words and so on. His teaching of reading was aimed at those who already knew how to read -- those who were all too familiar with letters and words. As he had appropriated Wittgenstein by reading Wittgenstein and had applied Wittgenstein's method to Descartes and others by reading Descartes and others, he had done so by virtue of the fact that he had himself learned how to read these people. He taught then, what he himself had learned so well -- how to read philosophy.

As a teacher, Bouwsma taught reading philosophy in the way that an artist might teach painting -- "I do it and then you do it." It is not that there were no instructions or guidelines; there were. And there was plenty of discussion where both Bouwsma and student were engaged in understanding the reading together. But the reading that Bouwsma practiced and taught had a radically subjective property. It was something one could only do for oneself -- like keeping warm for oneself. I can give you a blanket, but I cannot keep warm for you. Likewise, I can tell you of my reading and ask you a light-shedding question, but I cannot read for you. So Bouwsma read for himself and then he taught others, by means of his acquired skills, what reading meant, what he himself had learned to do. It is obvious, but still worth noticing, that unless Bouwsma had developed the skills of reading for himself, he could never have taught those skills to someone else. But the teaching of these skills could not be passed along as information, as what was being learned was the skill of how to read for oneself. In this respect, again, Bouwsma's teaching was Socratic. It is not that the truth was within each learner in the Socratic sense, but that the art of reading for oneself required a kind of inward eye which only the student reader could look through and train.

I should say now, before proceeding any further in describing this reading, that Bouwsma's reading required two tools. It required a pen and tablet. One cannot learn to read without these tools. One might as well learn how to paint without a brush and canvas. If one does not write as one reads, then he cannot learn to read as Bouwsma conceived of reading. If one tried to read some philosopher without writing, he would at best only be able to repeat what was said. "Wittgenstein or Plato said such and such and their theory was this ..." If Bouwsma had been a teacher in this sense, he would have been completely unremarkable as he would have contributed nothing to the occasion for the learner to have learned. Such direct reading and teaching, though it constitutes what most academic philosophers do, is merely an interesting repetition of what someone else has already written. The writing which the reader does, as he reads, is what constitutes the reading in this special sense of "reading." The writing makes the reading one's own. In the reading done by writing, the reader thinks the thoughts of the writer, or tries to, for himself. This is what only the reader can do -- the radically subjective element in reading. The reading done without writing is the reading of the recognition of marks on the page. The latter borders on the mechanical. Notice that writing-reading is not some "mysterious mental accompaniment" to reading, but the understanding gained and demonstrated by sentences that are written out on a tablet. The tablet, when filled, contains the dialectical history of a soul struggling to make someone else's thoughts one's own.

One cannot overstate the value of the pen and tablet in the art of reading. The Bouwsma collection at the Humanities Research Center in Austin has forty-eight file boxes, ninety-five percent of which contain pen-filled tablets written as Bouwsma read the authors which he made his own: Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard, Descartes, Joyce, Dostoevsky, and others. There is an impressive seriousness which the writing of these notebooks conveys. They were not written to achieve a reputation in philosophy nor to convey information to students. They were written, as one may readily see from glancing through any one of them, for Bouwsma to gain understanding of what he was reading (or listening to). At a glance, one sees a date and then, probably, some sentence such as: "Today in class N. brought to our attention the sentence from Wittgenstein: 'For a large class of cases ...'" Bouwsma usually wrote about sentences or specific short passages from a book. The

notebooks name names of particular students in the seminar. They make starts on ideas that often do not "pan out." They are full of interesting side tracks. They do not draw conclusions nor make summaries. My point is that they are not written for others to carry away Bouwsma's thoughts on the authors which he read. They were written so that Bouwsma himself might come to understand what he was reading. They convey seriousness because they show that here was a person who would work the hours of his day at gaining understanding. This understanding was not of the stock market nor of atoms, but of how one was to understand one's life. This was philosophy -- the love of wisdom. And it was practiced solely for the sake of wisdom without a trace of double-mindedness, i.e. without a trace of desiring to be regarded as wise.

The Socratic definition of "thinking" was that it was the soul in dialogue with itself. Bouwsma carried his notebook with him to facilitate that dialogue. The books he read carried the sentences which posited the initial theses of the dialectical process. He then carried out the dialogue with himself on paper in the notebook -- by fountain pen. He would write about sentences he found anywhere. They were usually from some book which he had set as a task for himself to read. He had an intuitive sense for picking a sentence that was crucial to the understanding of the book or some part of it. Often he would choose the first sentence of the book as his starting point. Sometimes he would become fascinated with some sentence that he had read many times but had never noticed before. He would write down a sentence a student had spoken in a seminar, and then write about that sentence later. His colleagues would provide him with sentences on many occasions. His source of sentences was not limited to philosophers. He would jot down sentences from novels or remarks about science or historiography from newspapers or magazines. When the Bouwsmas at last purchased a television, he would write down something he heard on television on the back of a notebook page. These sentences which he fastened on were fascinating to his peculiarly trained eye. Something about them must have stood out to him, before he could articulate what, so that he intuitively knew that they would be fruitful. Even from those sentences which he did not understand, he selected some that he knew would yield fruit in his notebook -- almost as if they had an invisible twinkle that his eye could catch. Language everywhere became his reading material. The world, given in language, was his book. And his notebook was his tool for shaping his understanding of it. He shaped himself as a philosopher by means of taking the thoughts of others and writing about them until he had fashioned an understanding of them in his thinking. His distinctiveness became the particular understanding which he had thus shaped. Writing in his notebook made his reading different from reading in the ordinary sense. And it was this special reading that he taught.

This writing that made his reading special -- what was it like? To account for this one must give the features of Bouwsma's thought. This is not an easy task. It would involve presenting Bouwsma's conception of philosophy -- what he had appropriated from Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard in particular. It would also involve his understanding of Christianity. With regard to Wittgenstein, Bouwsma's writing reflected the details of the art of attacking philosophical questions. What is the ordinary use of a word which the philosopher has used in a new way? How is the philosopher's use queer? What misleading analogies lie underneath and were productive of that queeriness? He takes time for the development of examples and cases in order to work through these questions and to break the power which the generalization holds over the quick mind. With regard to Kierkegaard's influence,

Bouwsma's writing reflected an existential turn. What would a life look like that believed some philosophy? What would this idea look like if some particular person believed it? Bouwsma liked stories of the ordinary: How does one who is in love talk? How does a father warn his son of danger? What does Bob Cratchit do all day with numbers? And what is bothering Scrooge? Reflecting Kierkegaard too, he wrote with a picture of the roll of Scriptures in correcting misunderstandings in philosophy of religion. In this and other respects, his writing reflected his understanding of Christianity. For not only could he use Scripture for the untangling of religious concepts, he could quote Scripture as one who loved the language and understood the power of the gospel for salvation. He took the Bible as God's word and the reading of it as God's revelation to the reader. But if the teaching which saves comes through God, then what were these writings which he, Bouwsma, produced? They were not the words of salvation, not the words of philosophical truth. They were the words of humility -- of one who understands of what could not be understood that it can not be understood and of one who spoke no more than what he did understand. These would be the features of Bouwsma's thought which one would have to develop in order to give an account of what his notebook writing in relation to his reading was like. Of course the particulars of the work on some specific book or sentence would be what one needed to see in order to see what his writing-reading was really like.

I have said that Bouwsma took sentences from everywhere as his reading material, writing primarily about sentences in his notebooks. An interesting question concerning the sources of these sentences is: What books did Bouwsma read? This is not simply a question about his preferences among philosophers or his tastes in literature. If Bouwsma was primarily a teacher and what he taught was reading, then he had something that should be called a philosophy of education. What books should be read then? seems like a pertinent question for such a philosophy of education based on reading.

One might conclude, rightly, from the description of his choosing sentences from anywhere that Bouwsma would not have advocated a canon of great books as the essence of an education. The idea of education by "exposure" to great books and great ideas ran against his grain and stands against the essence of his concept of reading. In the contemporary debates over the canon and familiarity with a body of basic knowledge of our cultural roots, Bouwsma could not stand on the Hirsch and Bloom side -- at least not on the caricatures of that side. Within philosophy, Wittgenstein's work is iconoclastic and Bouwsma, sharing this, worshipped no book because of its place in the culture or in the history of ideas.

But Bouwsma did read the great books of Western culture, cherishing their ideas and especially their manner of expression. He did not waste his time with books in philosophy or in literature which were not fine and magnificent. The books he read would show up in everyone's canon. He would read and re-read the works of Plato, St. Augustine, Descartes, Hume, Joyce, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Elliot, Auden, Camus, Kierkegaard, and several others. There were, interestingly, classics which he chose not to read and re-read: Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant, and Hegel -- most noticeably in philosophy -- and these probably because of their language. He chose to read authors who were fine writers -- fine craftsmen of their medium, i.e. language. He also chose authors who struggled with the thoughts which were important to him. He was after all a philosopher. And if the reading which he practiced and taught was to proceed in conjunction with writing for oneself, then what was chosen to be read had to have personal significance, that is, significance

for what it meant to be a human being. It would be difficult to have such self-development through reading a book about something such as the recent developments in the technology of the running shoe or about the stock market. So there were classics or great books for him and books which he recommended to others, by example. He did not say to students "You really ought to read this or that book," but only by reading it himself, in his manner, did he impart his commendation of a book to another.

A great book was to be read because a great mind had written it. And Bouwsma often noted, parenthetically, how long it had taken the great mind to write it. These books were not dashed off to get tenure or to make a reputation. The great mind, and one must remember that Bouwsma never talked this way, was not great by virtue of the accumulation of knowledge nor of the power of insight and generalization. The great mind for Bouwsma was one that struggled sincerely for that which would give life meaning. It is true that such philosophers as Descartes and Hume were capable of displaying great learning, making generalizations and blunders, even shallow cleverness. But Bouwsma saw in them this mark of greatness -- that they were after all concerned for the truth. Their works were demonstrations of the fact that they were willing to spend their lives in pursuit of such truth. And were they not intelligent and impressive in the presentation of their thoughts? -- Descartes' dream argument and the evil genius, and Hume's impressions and ideas, bundle theory of the self, and distinction between matters of fact and relations of ideas. The great mind was productive of intellectual food for the one who hungered for answers to such questions as: What is this world about? and What am I to become? A great book would be one which tried to feed this hunger. Reading such a book would not transfer the food from the great mind to the student's mind, but it would give the student the right sort of diet for his or her appetite.

In the contemporary educational debate over canons and cultural diversity, Bouwsma would take a middle way that refused the dilemma. He would refuse to speak the nonsense of either side. His aim in teaching reading was not to expose the student to his culture through its distinguished thinkers, as one would expose distinguished light to film. To be a thinker is not to be so impressionable, but to hold dialogue with oneself (Socrates). But neither was his aim to teach that anyone's perspective is no more than one of many perspectives nor that the writers of the books of one's canon have, to the man, uncritically described the true world from their perspective. There may be appropriate occasions to take notice of one's own circumstances and interests in telling a certain story or giving a certain description. Oh yes, and Bouwsma read Nietzsche too. Bouwsma knew of the many truths that could be told by people about their world and their motives for doing so. He could see from their perspective how their world appeared, and could admire their truths and their integrity. But he could not make sense of the abandonment of the concept of intelligibility. Regardless of the idiosyncrasies of perspective, there still were such things as understanding oneself, understanding what others have said, and understanding another's perspective. There still was such a thing as understanding the limits of what could be understood. And there still was such a thing as nonsense! Notwithstanding the fact that Bouwsma appreciated cultural diversity and its appropriate correction to objectivist theories, this was not his aim in teaching. His aim was to teach students how to read. He could no more side with these cultural relativists than with the traditionalists. To be

a reader in the sense Bouwsma taught was to learn how to avoid the nonsense on both sides of the pathway.

Neither exposure to great books then, nor the destruction of uncritical cultural perspective were the aims of Bouwsma's educational program. Though he read and encouraged others to read selected great books in philosophy and literature, he also encouraged them to read, really read, whatever was around them. Again, as well as great literature, he read and wrote about student notebooks, contemporary novels, play reviews in magazines, and whatever passed through his life. I should add that the remarks of the various philosophers with whom he discussed philosophy served in the same capacity as a book in providing grist sentences for his reading-writing mill. Most notably, his conversations with Wittgenstein in 1949-51 provided just such occasions for the production of remarks for him to record and write about in his notebooks. Wittgenstein was like a book for Bouwsma in this regard. There are also some fascinating entries in his notebooks on his discussions with Yorick Smythies. He wrote particularly about discussions which the two of them had about Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground* and a related paper which Smythies wrote called "Nonlogical Falsity." The notebooks are full of such writings on sentences which Bouwsma picked out of discussions with fellow philosophers. One did not have to be in the canon for Bouwsma to find an interesting sentence in what one had said or written. One had only to write or speak an interesting sentence to be subject matter in his notebook, although he did have high standards for what counted as interesting. Having said this, I now regard it as misleading because the interest in the sentence came as much from him as from its author. It should also be noted that he often found a sentence interesting because of the nonsense it contained. Once the sentence or remark was written down, Bouwsma's task was to understand it. Was it intelligible? He had learned and then taught that not everything that looks intelligible at first reading really is intelligible at second reading. The surface grammar of a sentence may look fine: subject, verb, and direct object all properly placed and in the right tense and case. But a deeper look might reveal that the ordinary uses of one word clash with those of another. In philosophy, Bouwsma believed and showed that such deception was rampant. And what then? In the notebook he uncovered the deception, made it plain, and suggested how it might have come to be. The aim of many epistemologists has been described as "the avoidance of error." Bouwsma's aim might be described as "the avoidance of deception" or "the avoidance of nonsense." In teaching reading he was teaching his students this avoidance: "Don't be taken in. Philosopher's sentences are treacherous deceptions." And of course, if there was nonsense hidden in some sentences of philosophers there was also sense in other sentences. And his task sometimes was to present or explain what someone did mean or must have meant.

There is an interesting tangent to Bouwsma's thoughts about reading in relation to his educational philosophy which has to do with literature. It is worth the time to follow this tangent. Throughout his professional life as a teacher, Bouwsma read and in some sense taught English literature. Some of that literature was the sort that lent itself to his writing. He wrote, for example, about the works of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Camus. I do not know the extent to which he wrote about the works of James Joyce, he did not use him much with his students, but he read him intensely over a long period and experimented frequently with Joyce's style in his own writing. Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Camus were philosophical writers. Dostoevsky's characters actually sit down and argue philosophical points with each other. There is something philosophical in all of them and this captured Bouwsma's

interest. Joyce is peculiar to literature in his designing puzzles with words and sentences which require their solution as part of the reader's enjoyment. This might be done, I am guessing, by means of writing in a notebook. What I am getting at is that Bouwsma's writing in his notebook as a part of his reading was developed as an art in connection with philosophy. I do not believe that Bouwsma saw the need to write, reading literature, as he did see the need to write, reading philosophy. I will be bold and say that he did not write about literature in so far as it was literature. He may, that is, have written about philosophy in literature, but not about the literature insofar as it was literature.

The reason for this is that Bouwsma saw literature and the reading of it as different from philosophy and the reading of philosophy. The aim of philosophy was to gain understanding (clarity) about the world and our place in it. But the aim of literature is aesthetic delight. By this I mean that Bouwsma thought the purpose of literature was to provide joy through the love of beauty in language. As one can see directly in at least two published essays, "Are Poems Statements?" and "Poetry Becomes Truth," Bouwsma reacted violently to the idea that poetry, and I think literature in general, set as its aim the making of true statements about the world. Why is there this endless chatter about what the poem meant?! "Why, when one has read a poem, must he say something?" ("Poetry Becomes Truth," *Toward A New Sensibility* 271). Why are there library shelves full of books on literary criticism?! "The necessity of a commissar of right talk is obvious ..." (272). Perhaps one should be made "to swear to silence in solitude during and after the reading" of a poem. What prompted this violent reaction from this otherwise gentle man? It was that he believed that poetry and literature in general was language shaped for aesthetic delight. Frequently, Bouwsma wrote on section #43 of the *Philosophical Investigations*: "For a large class of cases -- though not for all -- in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language." And when he considered what "not for all" meant, he almost always thought of poetry. Poetry did not fit in the large class of ordinary uses of language. In what sense was language even being "used" in poetry? The idea of use presupposes a language-game, but a poem is not a word or set of words in a language-game. A poem, for Bouwsma, was language on a holiday. It was there for enjoyment.

Poetry and other language of literature that has been crafted for beauty, then, is not intended to make statements. It is not intended to describe the world or understand the world in the way that philosophy, at least, purports to. And for the same reasons, poetry and literature are not crafted for our moral improvement. This is not to say that no writers of literature recommends values. There are, we know, some fine crafters of language who were preachers. But why did they choose to craft the language for beauty's sake rather than to preach directly? In so far as they chose to craft language they had the interest of aesthetic delight in mind. Bouwsma insisted on this understanding of literature wherever it came up in his writings and in his seminars. I remember many discussions in which he could hold off an entire room of philosophy and English graduate students on this point that the essential purpose of literature was not moral improvement. Literature does not make one better. Literature is there for our enjoyment. There is a scandalous addition to this idea which completed the thought in Bouwsma's mind. It is that the enjoyment of literature was a part of what it meant to "glorify God and enjoy Him forever" (Westminster Catechism). One cannot get a picture of Bouwsma's conception of teaching and education without understanding this conception of poetry and

literature. (See "Jack and Jill on a Log," *Prairie Schooner* 1944 for a lengthy discussion of this.)

The writing and teaching of poetry and literature are not designed for the moral improvement of the learner. One, a student of literature, might accidentally fasten on some image or story which, in his inward dialogue, might play a role in his moral development. But this would be completely accidental to the crafting of the language for beauty. To see this point, one should remember that such an event could never be predicted by the poet or novelist and that such an event might come in the midst of a poor piece of art. It is not a function, that is, of well crafted language. Wittgenstein, for example, tells of his being struck by the line "No one can harm me," in a poorly done undergraduate production of an undistinguished play. But he left the play with this line, thinking about what it would be like to live in the belief that no one could harm him. This made a difference to him. But who could have predicted this?! And it was certainly not a function of the artistic quality of the play. Bouwsma was making a categorical distinction insisting on separating moral improvement from aesthetic delight as the aim of poetry and literature. When he read literature, it was purely something which he loved and took delight in. And when, in philosophy, he talked about the function of literature, he always described it as something that one might come to love and take delight in.

The distinction here between literature's function as aesthetic delight and as moral improvement or moral statement is one Bouwsma also saw in Kierkegaard's distinction between the aesthetic and ethical stages. The aesthetic category is the one in which the individual aims at pleasure. There are "pleasures" which please some and not others and "pleasures" that please one person at some time but not at others. A more sensitive consciousness requires more refined pleasures. But such distinctions are not made on moral grounds. A pleasure which has higher moral value, has it on moral grounds and not on aesthetic grounds. The aesthetic stage in Kierkegaard leads to disaster, but only from an ethical point of view. If one does not adopt that point of view, the wreck of the aesthetic life is merely a fact -- the fact that one cannot sustain pleasure in time, and consequently pleasure cannot produce eudaimonia. Neither Don Juan's pleasures nor the pleasures produced by Mozart can seduce the good spirit to stay with the individual. But Bouwsma lived in the religious stage and not the aesthetic. For him the pleasures of poetry and literature were no disappointment. He never believed about them that they could sustain themselves nor that they could sustain him. Their purpose was pleasure -- aesthetic delight. And such pleasure was simply a gift of God. His sustenance came from God, and poetry and literature must have seemed to him an unearned gift which complemented his life of faith. As a teacher, consequently, Bouwsma did not teach literature as a way of sustaining the human spirit. In fact, he did not teach literature at all. He used it rather in helping to gain clarity with respect to philosophical topics -- it gave detail to philosophical abstractions.

I want to return now to what Bouwsma did teach -- that special kind of reading of philosophy that I have been describing. As literature and the teaching of it did not sustain the human spirit in Bouwsma's view, neither did philosophy nor his teaching of the reading of it. The aim of Bouwsma's teaching of this reading was clarity. And, for different reasons, clarity does not sustain the human spirit either. Gaining clarity or understanding of one's world would seem to be rock-bottom essential to spiritual sustenance. And, in one sense, it is. But in Bouwsma's world-view, it was God and particularly God in Christ, that gave such sustenance. Philosophy and the reading of philosophical books could not lead to the Christian

life. The philosophical reading which Bouwsma practiced led to understanding what could and could not be understood. Philosophy leads to the mystery of life, and the achievement of clarity reveals where the mystery lay. But only God in faith could take one beyond where philosophy can. Philosophy's attention can be turned on faith, but it can only yield the clarity that faith cannot be understood as a rational enterprise. This is Kierkegaard's "Absolute Paradox." Sustenance of the human spirit comes from the "God-man." Philosophy only gains clarity.

This, of course, means that many people are sustained by faith who have no benefits of the clarity gained through philosophy. It also means that many of those who gain the clarity of philosophy do not obtain the sustenance of faith. But sustenance or no, clarity was an important driving force in Bouwsma's life. He was after all a philosopher. And those students who were not religious were every bit as affected by learning his reading skills as those who were not religious. To gain clarity on the question of meaning or the ontological argument was a goal worth pursuing regardless of one's religious beliefs.

The point is that Bouwsma's goal in teaching the reading of philosophy was not to impart faith nor spiritual sustenance nor the truth about the nature of the world, but to sharpen the tools of understanding in the mind of the student. There was no transfer of substance from the teacher to the learner. In this respect his teaching was always Socratic. To read philosophy was to acquire the skills of determining intelligibility -- to learn to distinguish sense from seeming sense. Bouwsma wished for the readers he taught, the confidence to say "This is nonsense!"

"The maximum of what one human being can do for another . . . is to inspire him with concern and unrest." A teacher cannot give the student truth nor faith. A teacher cannot even "give" the student the art of reading philosophy in such a manner. But a teacher could, through developing a new sensibility to language and by means of an ineffable twinkle in his eye, inspire the student to concern and unrest. And in such a manner Bouwsma taught reading.

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